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WHITE JACKET;

OR,

THE WORLD IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

BY

HERMAN MELVILLE,

AUTHOR OF "TYPEE," "OMOO," "MARDI," AND "REDBURN."

"Conceive him now in a man-of-war; with his letters of mart, well armed, victualled, and appointed, and see how he acquits himself."—*FULLER's Good Sea-Captain.*

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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1850.



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PREFACE.

THE object of this work is to give some idea of the interior life in a man-of-war. In the year 1843, the author shipped as a common sailor on board of a United States frigate, then lying in a harbour of the Pacific Ocean. After serving on board of this frigate for more than a year, he was discharged, with the rest of the crew, upon the vessel's arrival home. His man-of-war experiences and observations have been incorporated into the present volumes. But these volumes are not presented as a journal of the cruise.

As the object of this work is not to portray the particular man-of-war in which the author sailed, and its officers and crew, but, by illustrative scenes, to paint general life in the Navy, the true name of the frigate is not given. Nor is it here asserted that any of the persons introduced in the following

chapters are real individuals. Wherever statements are made in any way concerning the established laws and usages of the Navy, facts have been strictly adhered to. Allusion is sometimes made to events or facts in the past history of Navies. In these cases, no statement is presented unless supported by the best authorities. For the hitherto unrecorded by-play of circumstances in one or two well-known naval actions referred to, the writer is indebted to the seamen into whose mouths these things are put.

The work opens at the frigate's last harbour in the Pacific, just previous to weighing her anchor for the homeward-bound passage, by the way of Cape Horn.

NEW YORK, *October*, 1849.

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WHITE-JACKET.



CHAPTER I.

THE JACKET.

It was not a very white jacket, but white enough, in all conscience, as the sequel will show.

The way I came by it was this.

When our frigate lay in Callao, on the coast of Peru—her last harbour in the Pacific—I found myself without a *grego*, or sailor's surtout; and as, toward the end of a three years' cruise, no pea-jackets could be had from the purser's steward; and being bound for Cape Horn, some sort of a substitute was indispensable; I employed myself, for several days, in manufacturing an outlandish garment of my own devising, to shelter me from the boisterous weather we were so soon to encounter.

It was nothing more than a white duck frock, or rather shirt; which, spreading on deck, I folded double

at the bosom, and by then making a continuation of the slit there, opened it lengthwise—much as you would cut a leaf in the last new novel. The gash being made, a metamorphosis took place, transcending any related by Ovid. For, presto! the shirt was a coat!—a strange-looking coat, to be sure; of a Quakerish amplitude about the skirts; with an infirm, tumble-down collar; and a clumsy fulness about the wristbands; and white, yea, white as a shroud. And my shroud it afterward came very near proving, as he who reads further will find.

But, bless me, my friend, what sort of a summer jacket is this, in which to weather Cape Horn? A very tasty, and beautiful white linen garment it may have seemed; but then, people almost universally sport their linen next to their skin.

Very true; and that thought very early occurred to me; for no idea had I of scudding round Cape Horn in my shirt; for that would have been almost scudding under bare poles indeed.

So, with many odds and ends of patches—old socks, old trowser-legs, and the like—I bedarned and be-quilted the inside of my jacket, till it became, all over, stiff and padded, as King James's cotton-stuffed and dagger-proof doublet; and no buckram or steel hauberk stood up more stoutly.

So far, very good; but pray, tell me, White-Jacket, how do you propose keeping out the rain and the wet

in this quilted *grego* of yours? You don't call this wad of old patches a Mackintosh, do you?—You don't pretend to say that worsted is water-proof?

No, my dear friend; and that was the deuce of it. Water-proof it was not, no more than a sponge. Indeed, with such recklessness had I bequilted my jacket, that in a rain-storm I became a universal absorber; swabbing bone-dry the very bulwarks I leaned against. Of a damp day, my heartless shipmates even used to stand up against me, so powerful was the capillary attraction between this luckless jacket of mine and all drops of moisture. I dripped like a turkey a' roasting; and long after the rain-storms were over, and the sun showed his face, I still stalked a Scotch mist; and when it was fair weather with others, alas! it was foul weather with me.

Soaked and heavy, what a burden was that jacket to carry about, especially when I was sent up aloft; dragging myself up, step by step, as if I were weighing the anchor. Small time then, to strip, and ring it out in a rain, when no hanging back or delay was permitted. No, no; up you go: fat or lean: Lambert or Edson: never mind how much avoirdupoise you might weigh. And thus, in my own proper person, did many showers of rain reascend toward the skies, in accordance with the natural laws.

But here be it known, that I had been terribly disappointed in carrying out my original plan concerning

this jacket. It had been my intention to make it thoroughly impervious, by giving it a coating of paint. But bitter fate ever overtakes us unfortunates. So much paint had been stolen by the sailors, in daubing their overhaul trowsers and tarpaulins, that by the time I—an honest man—had completed my quiltings, the paint-pots were banned, and put under strict lock and key.

Said old Brush, the captain of the paint-room—
“Look ye, White-Jacket,” said he, “ye can’t have any paint.”

Such, then, was my jacket: a well-patched, padded, and porous one; and in a dark night, gleaming white, as the White Lady of Avenel!

CHAPTER II.

HOMEWARD-BOUND.

“ALL hands up anchor! Man the capstan!”

“High die! my lads, we’re homeward bound!”

Homeward bound!—harmonious sound! Were you ever homeward bound?—No?—Quick! take the wings of the morning, or the sails of a ship, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth. There, tarry a year or two; and then let the gruffest of Boatswains, his lungs all goose-skin, shout forth those magical words, and you’ll swear “the harp of Orpheus were not more enchanting.”

All was ready; boats hoisted in, stun’ sail gear rove, messenger passed, capstan-bars in their places, accommodation-ladder below; and in glorious spirits, we sat down to dinner. In the ward-room, the lieutenants were passing round their oldest Port, and pledging their friends; in the steerage, the *middies* were busy raising loans to liquidate the demands of their laundress, or else—in the navy phrase—preparing to pay their creditors *with a flying fore-topsail*. On the poop, the

captain was looking to windward; and in his grand, inaccessible cabin, the high and mighty commodore sat silent and stately, as the statue of Jupiter in Dodona.

We were all arrayed in our best and our bravest; like strips of blue sky, lay the pure blue collars of our frocks upon our shoulders; and our pumps were so springy and playful, that we danced up and down as we dined.

It was on the gun-deck that our dinners were spread; all along between the guns; and there, as we cross-legged sat, you would have thought a hundred farm-yards and meadows were nigh. Such a cackling of ducks, chickens, and ganders; such a lowing of oxen, and bleating of lambkins, penned up here and there along the deck, to provide sea repasts for the officers. More rural than naval were the sounds; continually reminding each mother's son of the old paternal homestead in the green old clime; the old arching elms; the hill where we gambolled; and down by the barley banks of the stream where we bathed.

“All hands up anchor!”

When that order was given, how we sprang to the bars, and heaved round that capstan; every man a Goliath, every tendon a hawser!—round and round—round, round it spun like a sphere, keeping time with our feet to the time of the fifer, till the cable was straight up and down, and the ship with her nose in the water.

“Heave and pall! unship your bars, and make sail!”

It was done :—bar-men, nipper-men, tierers, veerers, idlers and all, scrambled up the ladder to the braces and halyards; while, like monkeys in palm-trees, the sail-loosers ran out on those broad boughs, our yards; and down fell the sails like white clouds from the ether—top-sails, top-gallants, and royals; and away we ran with the halyards, till every sheet was distended.

“Once more to the bars!”

“Heave, my hearties, heave hard!”

With a jerk and a yerk, we broke ground; and up to our bows came several thousand pounds of old iron, in the shape of our ponderous anchor.

Where was White-Jacket then?

White-Jacket was where he belonged. It was White-Jacket that loosed that main-royal, so far up aloft there, it looks like a white albatross' wing. It was White-Jacket that was taken for an albatross himself, as he flew out on the giddy yard-arm!

CHAPTER III.

A GLANCE AT THE PRINCIPAL DIVISIONS, INTO WHICH A MAN-OF-WAR'S
CREW IS DIVIDED.

HAVING just designated the place where White-Jacket belonged, it must needs be related how White-Jacket came to belong there.

Every one knows that in merchantmen the seamen are divided into watches — starboard and larboard — taking their turn at the ship's duty by night. This plan is followed in all men-of-war. But in all men-of-war, besides this division, there are others, rendered indispensable from the great number of men, and the necessity of precision and discipline. Not only are particular bands assigned to the three *tops*, but in getting under weigh, or any other proceeding requiring all hands, particular men of these bands are assigned to each yard of the tops. Thus, when the order is given to loose the main-royal, White-Jacket flies to obey it ; and no one but he.

And not only are particular bands stationed on the three decks of the ship at such times, but particular men of those bands are also assigned to particular

duties. Also, in tacking ship, reefing top-sails, or "coming to," every man of a frigate's five-hundred-strong, knows his own special place, and is infallibly found there. He sees nothing else, attends to nothing else, and will stay there till grim death or an epaulette orders him away. Yet there are times when, through the negligence of the officers, some exceptions are found to this rule. A rather serious circumstance growing out of such a case will be related in some future chapter.

Were it not for these regulations a man-of-war's crew would be nothing but a mob, more ungovernable stripping the canvass in a gale than Lord George Gordon's tearing down the lofty house of Lord Mansfield.

But this is not all. Besides White-Jacket's office as looser of the main-royal, when all hands were called to make sail; and besides his special offices, in tacking ship, coming to anchor, &c.; he permanently belonged to the Starboard Watch, one of the two primary, grand divisions of the ship's company. And in this watch he was a main-top-man; that is, was stationed in the main-top, with a number of other seamen, always in readiness to execute any orders pertaining to the main-mast, from above the main-yard. For, including the main-yard, and below it to the deck, the main-mast belongs to another detachment.

Now the fore, main, and mizen-top-men of each watch—Starboard and Larboard—are at sea respectively

subdivided into Quarter Watches ; which regularly relieve each other in the tops to which they may belong ; while, collectively, they relieve the whole Larboard Watch of topmen.

Besides these topmen, who are always made up of active sailors, there are Sheet-Anchor-men—old veterans all—whose place is on the forecastle ; the foreyard, anchors, and all the sails on the bowsprit being under their care.

They are an old weather-beaten set, culled from the most experienced seamen on board. These are the fellows that sing you "*The Bay of Biscay Oh !*" and "*Here a sheer hulk lies poor Tom Bowling !*" "*Cease, rude Boreas, blustering railer !*" who, when ashore, at an eating-house, call for a bowl of tar and a biscuit. These are the fellows, who spin interminable yarns about Decatur, Hull, and Bainbridge ; and carry about their persons bits of "Old Ironsides," as Catholics do the wood of the true cross. These are the fellows, that some officers never pretend to damn, however much they may anathematize others. These are the fellows, that it does your soul good to look at ;—hearty old members of the Old Guard ; grim sea grenadiers, who, in tempest time, have lost many a tarpaulin overboard. These are the fellows, whose society some of the younger midshipmen much affect ; from whom they learn their best seamanship ; and to whom they look up as veterans ; if so be, that they have any reverence in

their souls, which is not the case with all midshipmen.

Then, there is the *After-guard*, stationed on the Quarter-deck; who, under the Quarter-Masters and Quarter-Gunners, attend to the main-sail and spanker, and help haul the main-brace, and other ropes in the stern of the vessel.

The duties assigned to the After-Guard's-men being comparatively light and easy, and but little seamanship being expected from them, they are composed chiefly of landsmen; the least robust, least hardy, and least sailor-like of the crew; and being stationed on the Quarter-deck, they are generally selected with some eye to their personal appearance. Hence, they are mostly slender young fellows, of a genteel figure and gentlemanly address; not weighing much on a rope, but weighing considerably in the estimation of all foreign ladies who may chance to visit the ship. They lounge away the most part of their time, in reading novels and romances; talking over their lover affairs ashore; and comparing notes concerning the melancholy and sentimental career which drove them—poor young gentlemen—into the hard-hearted navy. Indeed, many of them show tokens of having moved in very respectable society. They always maintain a tidy exterior; and express an abhorrence of the tar-bucket, into which they are seldom or never called to dip their digits. And pluming themselves upon the cut of their trowsers, and the

glossiness of their tarpaulins, from the rest of the ship's company, they acquire the name of "*sea-dandies*" and "*silk-sock-gentry*."

Then, there are the *Waisters*, always stationed on the gun-deck. These haul aft the fore and main-sheets, besides being subject to ignoble duties; attending to the drainage and sewerage below hatches. These fellows are all Jimmy Duxes—sorry chaps, who never put foot in ratlin, or venture above the bulwarks. Inveterate "*sons of farmers*," with the hay-seed yet in their hair, they are consigned to the congenial superintendence of the chicken-coops, pig-pens, and potato-lockers. These are generally placed amidships, on the gun-deck of a frigate, between the fore and main hatches; and comprise so extensive an area, that it much resembles the market-place of a small town. The melodious sounds thence issuing, continually draw tears from the eyes of the *Waisters*; reminding them of their old paternal pig-pens and potato-patches. They are the tag-rag and bob-tail of the crew; and he who is good for nothing else is good enough for a *Waister*.

Three decks down—spar-deck, gun-deck, and berth-deck—and we come to a parcel of Troglodites or "*holders*," who burrow, like rabbits in warrens, among the water-tanks, casks, and cables. Like Cornwall miners, wash off the soot from their skins, and they are all pale as ghosts. Unless upon rare occasions, they seldom come on deck to sun themselves. They may

circumnavigate the world fifty times, and they see about as much of it as Jonah did in the whale's belly. They are a lazy, lumpish, torpid set ; and when going ashore after a long cruise, come out into the day, like terrapins from their caves, or bears in the spring, from tree-trunks. No one ever knows the names of these fellows ; after a three years' voyage, they still remain strangers to you. In time of tempests, when all hands are called to save ship, they issue forth into the gale, like the mysterious old men of Paris, during the massacre of the Three Days of September ; every one marvels who they are, and whence they come ; they disappear as mysteriously ; and are seen no more, until another general commotion.

Such are the principal divisions into which a man-of-war's crew is divided ; but the inferior allotments of duties are endless, and would require a German commentator to chronicle.

We say nothing here of Boatswain's mates, Gunner's mates, Carpenter's mates, Sail-maker's mates, Armorer's mates, Master-at-Arms, Ship's corporals, Cockswains, Quarter-masters, Quarter-gunners, Captains of the Forecastle, Captains of the Fore-top, Captains of the Main-top, Captains of the Mizen-top, Captains of the After-Guard, Captains of the Main-Hold, Captains of the Fore-Hold, Captains of the Head, Coopers, Painters, Tinkers, Commodore's Steward, Captain's Steward, Ward-Room Steward, Steerage

Steward, Commodore's cook, Captain's cook, Officers' cook, Cooks of the range, Mess-cooks, hammock-boys, messenger-boys, cot-boys, loblolly-boys, and numberless others, whose functions are fixed and peculiar.

It is from this endless subdivision of duties in a man-of-war, that, upon first entering one, a sailor has need of a good memory, and the more of an Arithmetician he is, the better.

White-Jacket, for one, was a long time rapt in calculations, concerning the various "numbers" allotted him by the *First Luff*, otherwise known as the First Lieutenant. In the first place, White-Jacket was given the *number of his mess*; then, his *ship's number*, or the number to which he must answer when the watch-roll is called; then, the number of his hammock; then, the number of the gun to which he was assigned; besides a variety of other numbers; all of which would have taken Jedediah Buxton himself some time to arrange in battalions, previous to adding up. All these numbers, moreover, must be well remembered, or woe betide you.

Consider, now, a merchant-sailor altogether unused to the tumult of a man-of-war, for the first time stepping on board, and given all these numbers to recollect. Already, before hearing them, his head is half stunned with the unaccustomed sounds ringing in his ears; which ears seem to him like belfries full of tocsins. On the gun-deck, a thousand scythed chariots seem

passing; he hears the tread of armed marines; the clash of cutlasses and curses. The Boatswain's mates whistle round him, like hawks screaming in a gale, and the strange noises under decks, are like volcanic rumblings in a mountain. He dodges sudden sounds, as a raw recruit falling bombs.

Well-nigh useless to him, now, all previous circum-navigations of this terraqueous globe; of no account his arctic, antarctic, or equinoctial experiences; his gales off Beachy Head, or his dismastings off Hatteras. He must begin anew; he knows nothing; Greek and Hebrew could not help him, for the language he must learn has neither grammar nor lexicon.

Mark him, as he advances along the files of old ocean-warriors; mark his debased attitude, his deprecating gestures, his Sawney stare, like a Scotchman in London in King James's time; his—"cry your mercy, noble signors!" He is wholly nonplused, and confounded. And when, to crown all, the First Lieutenant, whose business it is to welcome all new-comers, and assign them their quarters; when this officer—none of the most bland or amiable either—gives him number after number to recollect—246—139—478—351—the poor fellow feels like decamping.

Study, then, your mathematics, and cultivate all your memories, oh ye! who think of cruising in men-of-war.

CHAPTER IV.

JACK CHASE.

THE first night out of port was a clear, moonlight one; the frigate gliding through the water, with all her batteries.

It was my Quarter Watch in the top, and there I reclined on the best possible terms with my top-mates. Whatever the other seamen might have been, these were a noble set of tars, and well worthy an introduction to the reader.

First and foremost was Jack Chase, our noble First Captain of the Top. He was a Briton, and a true-blue; tall and well-knit, with a clear open eye, a fine broad brow, and an abounding nut-brown beard. No man ever had a better heart or a bolder. He was loved by the seamen, and admired by the officers; and even when the Captain spoke to him, it was with a slight air of respect. Jack was a frank and charming man.

No one could be better company in fore-castle or saloon; no man told such stories, sang such songs, or with greater alacrity sprang to his duty. Indeed, there was only one thing wanting about him, and that was a finger of his left hand, which finger he had lost at the great battle of Navarino.

He had a high conceit of his profession as a seaman ; and being deeply versed in all things pertaining to a man-of-war, was universally regarded as an oracle. The main-top, over which he presided, was a sort of Delphi, to which many pilgrims ascended, to have their perplexities or differences settled.

There was such an abounding air of good sense and good feeling about the man, that he who could not love him, would thereby pronounce himself a knave. I thanked my sweet stars that kind fortune had placed me near him, though under him, in the frigate ; and from the outset Jack and I were fast friends.

Wherever you may be now rolling over the blue billows, dear Jack ! take my best love along with you ; and God bless you, wherever you go !

Jack was a gentleman. What though his hand was hard, so was not his heart, too often the case with soft palms. His manners were easy and free ; none of the boisterousness, so common to tars ; and he had a polite, courteous way of saluting you, if it were only to borrow your knife. Jack had read all the verses of Byron, and all the romances of Scott. He talked of Rob Roy, Don Juan, and Pelham ; Macbeth and Ulysses ; but, above all things, was an ardent admirer of Camoens. Parts of the *Lusiad* he could recite in the original. Where he had obtained his wonderful accomplishments, it is not for me, his humble subordinate, to say. Enough, that those accomplishments were so various ; the lan-

guages he could converse in, so numerous, that he more than furnished an example of that saying of Charles the Fifth—*he who speaks five languages is as good as five men*. But Jack, he was better than a hundred common mortals; Jack was a whole phalanx, an entire army; Jack was a thousand strong; Jack would have done honour to the Queen of England's drawing-room; Jack must have been a by-blow of some British Admiral of the Blue. A finer specimen of the island race of Englishmen could not have been picked out of Westminster Abbey of a coronation day.

His whole demeanour was in strong contrast to that of one of the captains of the fore-top. This man, though a good seaman, furnished an example of those insufferable Britons, who, while preferring other countries to their own as places of residence, still, overflow with all the pompousness of national and individual vanity combined. "When I was on board the *Audacious*"—for a long time, was almost the invariable exordium to the fore-top captain's most cursory remarks. It is often the custom of men-of-war's men, when they deem anything to be going on wrong aboard ship, to refer to *last cruise*, when of course everything was done *ship-shape and Bristol fashion*. And by referring to the *Audacious*—an expressive name, by the way—the fore-top captain meant a ship in the English navy, in which he had had the honour of serving. So continual were his allusions to this craft with the amiable name, that

at last, the *Audacious* was voted a bore by his ship-mates. And one hot afternoon, during a calm, when the fore-top captain, like many others, was standing still and yawning on the spar-deck, Jack Chase, his own countryman, came up to him, and pointing at his open mouth, politely inquired, whether that was the way they caught *flies* in Her Britannic Majesty's ship, the *Audacious*? After that, we heard no more of the craft.

Now, the tops of a frigate are quite spacious and cosy. They are railed in behind so as to form a kind of balcony, very pleasant of a tropical night. From twenty to thirty loungers may agreeably recline there, cushioning themselves on old sails and jackets. We had rare times in that top. We accounted ourselves the best seamen in the ship; and from our airy perch, literally looked down upon the landlopers below, sneaking about the deck, among the guns. In a large degree, we nourished that feeling of *esprit de corps*, always pervading, more or less, the various sections of a man-of-war's crew. We main-top-men were brothers, one and all; and we loaned ourselves to each other with all the freedom in the world.

Nevertheless, I had not long been a member of this fraternity of fine fellows, ere I discovered that Jack Chase, our captain, was—like all prime favourites and oracles among men—a little bit of a dictator; not peremptorily, or annoyingly so, but amusingly intent on egotistically mending our manners and improving

our taste, so that we might reflect credit upon our tutor.

He made us all wear our hats at a particular angle—instructed us in the tie of our neckerchiefs ; and protested against our wearing vulgar *dungeree* trowsers, besides giving us lessons in seamanship, and solemnly conjuring us for ever to eschew the company of any sailor we suspected of having served in a whaler. Against all whalers, indeed, he cherished the unmitigated detestation of a true man-of-war's man. Poor Tubbs can testify to that.

Tubbs was in the After-guard ; a long, lank Vineyarder, eternally talking of line-tubs, Nantucket, sperm oil, stove boats, and Japan. Nothing could silence him ; and his comparisons were ever invidious.

Now, with all his soul, Jack abominated this Tubbs. He said he was vulgar, an upstart—Devil take him, he's been in a whaler. But, like many men who have been where you haven't been, or seen what you haven't seen, Tubbs, on account of his whaling experiences, absolutely affected to look down upon Jack, even as Jack did upon him ; and this it was that so enraged our noble captain.

One night, with a peculiar meaning in his eye, he sent me down on deck to invite Tubbs up aloft for a chat. Flattered by so marked an honour—for we were somewhat fastidious, and did not extend such invitations to everybody—Tubbs quickly mounted the rigging, looking rather abashed at finding himself in the august

presence of the assembled Quarter-watch of main-top-men. Jack's courteous manner, however, very soon relieved his embarrassment; but it is no use to be courteous to some men in this world. Tubbs belonged to that category. No sooner did the bumpkin feel himself at ease, than he launched out, as usual, into tremendous laudations of whalemén; declaring that whalemén alone deserved the name of sailors. Jack stood it some time; but when Tubbs came down upon men-of-war, and particularly upon main-top-men, his sense of propriety was so outraged, that he launched into Tubbs like a forty-two pounder.

“Why, you limb of Nantucket! you train-oil man! you sea-tallow strainer! you bobber after carrion! do *you* pretend to vilify a man-of-war? Why, you lean rogue, you, a man-of-war is to whalemén as a metropolis to shire-towns and sequestered hamlets. *Here's* the place for life and commotion; *here's* the place to be gentlemanly and jolly. And what did you know, you bumpkin! before you came on board this *Andrew Miller*? What knew you of gun-deck, or orlop, mustering round the capstan, beating to quarters, and piping to dinner? Did you ever roll to *grog* on board your greasy ballyhoo of blazes? Did you ever winter at Mahon? Did you ever ‘*lash and carry*?’ Why, what are even a merchant-seaman's sorry yarns of voyages to China after tea-caddies, and voyages to the West Indies after sugar puncheons, and voyages to the

Shetlands after seal-skins—what are even these yarns, you Tubbs you! to high life in a man-of-war? Why, you dead-eye! I have sailed with lords and marquises for captains; and the King of the Two Sicilies has passed me, as I here stood up at my gun. Bah! you are full of the fore-peak and the fore-castle; you are only familiar with Burtons and Billy-tackles; your ambition never amounted above pig-killing! which, in my poor opinion, is the proper phrase for whaling! Topmates! has not this Tubbs here been but a misuser of good oak planks, and a vile desecrator of the thrice-holy sea? turning his ship, my hearties! into a fat-kettle, and the ocean into a whale-pen? Begone, you graceless, godless knave! pitch him over the top there, White-Jacket!”

But there was no necessity for my exertions. Poor Tubbs, astounded at these fulminations, was already rapidly descending by the rigging.

This outburst on the part of my noble friend, Jack, made me shake all over, spite of my padded surtout; and caused me to offer up devout thanksgivings, that in no evil hour had I divulged the fact of having myself served in a whaler; for having previously marked the prevailing prejudice of man-of-war's men to that much-maligned class of mariners, I had wisely held my peace concerning stove boats on the coast of Japan.

CHAPTER V.

JACK CHASE ON A SPANISH QUARTER-DECK.

HERE, I must frankly tell a story about Jack, which, as touching his honour and integrity, I am sure, will not work against him in any charitable man's estimation. On this present cruise of the frigate *Neversink*, Jack had deserted; and after a certain interval, had been captured.

But with what purpose had he deserted? To avoid naval discipline? to riot in some abandoned sea-port? for love of some worthless signorita? Not at all. He abandoned the frigate from far higher and nobler, nay, glorious motives. Though bowing to naval discipline afloat, yet ashore, he was a stickler for the Rights of Man, and the liberties of the world. He went to draw a partisan blade in the civil commotions of Peru, and befriend, heart and soul, what he deemed the cause of the Right.

At the time, his disappearance excited the utmost astonishment among the officers, who had little suspected him of any such conduct as deserting.

"What? Jack, my great man of the main-top, gone!" cried the Captain: "I'll not believe it."

“ Jack Chase cut and run !” cried a sentimental middy. “ It must have been all for love, then ; the signoritas have turned his head.”

“ Jack Chase not to be found ?” cried a growling old sheet-anchor-man, one of your malicious prophets of past events : “ I thought so ; I know’d it ; I could have sworn it—just the chap to make sail on the sly. I always s’pected him.”

Months passed away, and nothing was heard of Jack ; till at last the frigate came to anchor on the coast, alongside of a Peruvian sloop of war.

Bravely clad in the Peruvian uniform, and with a fine, mixed martial and naval step, a tall, striking figure of a long-bearded officer was descried, promenading the quarter-deck of the stranger, and superintending the salutes, which are exchanged between national vessels on these occasions.

This fine officer touched his laced hat most courteously to our captain, who, after returning the compliment, stared at him, rather impolitely, through his spy-glass.

“ By Heaven !” he cried at last—“ it is he—he can’t disguise his walk—that’s his beard ; I’d know him in Cochin China. Man the first cutter there ! Lieutenant Blink, go on board that sloop of war, and fetch me yon officer.”

All hands were aghast.—What ? when a piping-hot peace was between the United States and Peru, to send

an armed body on board a Peruvian sloop of war, and seize one of its officers, in broad daylight?—Monstrous infraction of the Law of Nations! What would Vattel say?

But Captain Claret must be obeyed. So off went the cutter, every man armed to the teeth, the lieutenant commanding having secret instructions, and the midshipmen attending looking ominously wise, though, in truth, they could not tell what was coming.

Gaining the sloop of war, the lieutenant was received with the customary honours; but by this time the tall, bearded officer had disappeared from the Quarter-deck. The Lieutenant now inquired for the Peruvian Captain; and being shown into the cabin, made known to him, that on board his vessel was a person belonging to the United States Ship *Neversink*; and his orders were, to have that person delivered up instantler.

The foreign captain curled his mustache in astonishment and indignation; he hinted something about beating to quarters, and chastising this piece of Yankee insolence.

But resting one gloved hand upon the table, and playing with his sword-knot, the Lieutenant, with a bland firmness, repeated his demand. At last, the whole case being so plainly made out, and the person in question being so accurately described, even to a mole on his cheek, there remained nothing but immediate compliance.

So the fine-looking, bearded officer, who had so courteously doffed his chapeau to our Captain, but disappeared upon the arrival of the Lieutenant, was summoned into the cabin, before his superior, who addressed him thus:—

“Don John, this gentleman declares, that of right you belong to the frigate *Neversink*. Is it so?”

“It is even so, Don Sereno,” said Jack Chase, proudly folding his gold-laced coat-sleeves across his chest—“and as there is no resisting the frigate, I comply.—Lieutenant Blink, I am ready. Adieu! Don Sereno, and *Madre de Dios* protect you! You have been a most gentlemanly friend and captain to me. I hope you will yet thrash your beggarly foes.”

With that he turned; and entering the cutter, was pulled back to the frigate, and stepped up to Captain Claret, where that gentleman stood on the quarter-deck.

“Your servant, my fine Don,” said the Captain, ironically lifting his chapeau, but regarding Jack at the same time with a look of intense displeasure.

“Your most devoted and penitent Captain of the *Main-top*, sir; and one who, in his very humility of contrition, is yet proud to call Captain Claret his commander,” said Jack, making a glorious bow, and then tragically flinging overboard his Peruvian sword.

“Reinstate him at once,” shouted Captain Claret—“and now, sir, to your duty; and discharge that well

to the end of the cruise, and you will hear no more of your having run away."

So Jack went forward among crowds of admiring tars, who swore by his nut-brown beard, which had amazingly lengthened and spread during his absence. They divided his laced hat and coat among them; and on their shoulders, carried him in triumph along the gun-deck.

CHAPTER VI.

THE QUARTER-DECK OFFICERS, WARRANT OFFICERS, AND BERTH-DECK UNDERLINGS OF A MAN-OF-WAR ; WHERE THEY LIVE IN THE SHIP ; HOW THEY LIVE ; THEIR SOCIAL STANDING ON SHIP-BOARD ; AND WHAT SORT OF GENTLEMEN THEY ARE.

SOME account has been given of the various divisions into which our crew was divided ; so it may be well to say something of the officers ; who they are, and what are their functions.

Our ship, be it known, was the flag-ship ; that is, we sported a *broad pennant*, or *bougee*, at the main, in token that we carried a Commodore—the highest rank of officers recognised in the American navy. The bougee is not to be confounded with the *long pennant*, or *coach-whip*, a tapering, serpentine streamer worn by all men-of-war.

Owing to certain vague, republican scruples, about creating great officers of the navy, America has thus far had no admirals ; though, as her ships of war increase, they may become indispensable. This will assuredly be the case, should she ever have occasion to employ large fleets ; when she must adopt something like the English plan, and introduce three or four grades of flag-officers, above a Commodore—Admirals,

Vice-Admirals, and Rear-Admirals of Squadrons; distinguished by the colours of their flags,—red, white, and blue, corresponding to the centre, van, and rear. These rank respectively with Generals, Lieutenant Generals, and Major Generals in the army; just as a Commodore takes rank with a Brigadier General. So that the same prejudice which prevents the American Government from creating Admirals should have precluded the creation of all army officers above a Brigadier.

An American Commodore, like an English Commadore, or the French *Chef d'Escadre*, is but a senior Captain, temporarily commanding a small number of ships, detached for any special purpose. He has no permanent rank, recognised by Government, above his captaincy; though once employed as a Commodore, usage and courtesy unite in continuing the title.

Our Commodore was a gallant old man, who had seen service in his time. When a lieutenant, he served in the Late War with England; and in the gun-boat actions on the Lakes near New Orleans, just previous to the grand land engagements, received a musket-ball in his shoulder; which, with the two balls in his eyes, he carries about with him to this day.

Often, when I looked at the venerable old warrior, doubled up from the effect of his wound, I thought what a curious, as well as painful sensation it must be, to have one's shoulder a lead-mine; though, sooth to

say, so many of us civilized mortals convert our mouths into Golcondas.

On account of this wound in his shoulder, our Commodore had a body-servant's pay allowed him, in addition to his regular salary. I cannot say a great deal, personally, of the Commodore; he never sought my company at all; never extended any gentlemanly courtesies.

But though I cannot say much of him personally, I can mention something of him in his general character, as a flag-officer. In the first place, then, I have serious doubts, whether, for the most part, he was not dumb; for, in my hearing, he seldom or never uttered a word. And not only did he seem dumb himself, but his presence possessed the strange power of making other people dumb for the time. His appearance on the Quarter-deck seemed to give every officer the lock-jaw.

Another phenomenon about him was the strange manner in which every one shunned him. At the first sign of those epaulets of his on the weather side of the poop, the officers there congregated invariably shrunk over to leeward, and left him alone. Why was this? Why not be companionable with his officers? The reason probably was, that, like all high functionaries, our Commodore deemed it indispensable religiously to sustain his dignity; one of the most troublesome things in the world, and one calling for the greatest self-

denial. And the constant watch, and many-sided guardedness, which this sustaining of a Commodore's dignity requires, plainly enough shows that, apart from the common dignity of manhood, Commodores, in general, possess no real dignity at all. True, it is expedient for crowned heads, generalissimos, Lord-high-admirals, and Commodores, to carry themselves straight, and beware of the spinal complaint; but it is not the less veritable, that it is a piece of assumption, exceedingly uncomfortable to themselves, and ridiculous to an enlightened generation.

Now, how many rare good fellows there were among us main-top-men, who, invited into his cabin over a social bottle or two, would have rejoiced our old Commodore's heart, and caused that ancient wound of his to heal up at once.

Come, come, Commodore, don't look so sour, old boy; step up aloft here into the *top*, and we'll spin you a sociable yarn.

Truly, I thought myself much happier in that white jacket of mine, than our old Commodore in his dignified epaulets.

One thing, perhaps, that more than any thing else helped to make our Commodore so melancholy and forlorn, was the fact of his having so little to do. For as the frigate had a captain; of course, so far as *she* was concerned, our Commodore was a supernumerary. What abundance of leisure he must have had, during a three

years' cruise! how indefinitely he might have been improving his mind!

But as every one knows that idleness is the hardest work in the world, so our Commodore was specially provided with a gentleman to assist him. This gentleman was called the *Commodore's secretary*. He was a remarkably urbane and polished man; with a very graceful exterior, and looked much like an Ambassador Extraordinary from Versailles. He messed with the Lieutenants in the Ward-room, where he had a state-room, elegantly furnished as the private cabinet of Pelham. His cot-boy used to entertain the sailors with all manner of stories about the silver-keyed flutes and flageolets, fine oil paintings, morocco bound volumes, Chinese chess-men, gold shirt-buttons, enameled pencil cases, extraordinary fine French boots with soles no thicker than a sheet of scented note-paper, embroidered vests, incense-burning sealing wax, alabaster statuettes of Venus and Adonis, tortoise-shell snuff-boxes, inlaid toilet-cases, ivory-handled hair-brushes and mother-of-pearl combs, and a hundred other luxurious appendages scattered about this magnificent secretary's state-room.

I was a long time in finding out what this secretary's duties comprised. But it seemed, he wrote the Commodore's dispatches for Washington, and also was his general amanuensis. Nor was this a very light duty, at times; for some Commodores, though they do not *say* a great deal on board-ship, yet they have a vast

deal to write. Very often, the regimental orderly, stationed at our Commodore's cabin-door, would touch his hat to the First Lieutenant, and with a mysterious air hand him a note. I always thought these notes must contain most important matters of state ; until one day, seeing a slip of wet, torn paper in a scupper-hole, I read the following :—

“ Sir, you will give the people pickles to-day with their fresh meat.

“ To Lieutenant Bridewell.

“ By command of the Commodore.

“ ADOLPHUS DASHMAN, Priv. Sec.”

This was a new revelation ; for, from his almost immutable reserve, I had supposed that the Commodore never meddled immediately with the concerns of the ship, but left all that to the captain. But the longer we live, the more we learn of Commodores.

Turn we now to the second officer in rank, almost supreme, however, in the internal affairs of his ship. Captain Claret was a large, portly man, a Harry the Eighth afloat, bluff and hearty ; and as kingly in his cabin as Harry on his throne. For a ship is a bit of terra firma cut off from the main ; it is a state in itself ; and the captain is its king.

It is no limited monarchy, where the sturdy Commons have a right to petition, and snarl if they please ;

but almost a despotism, like the Grand Turk's. The captain's word is law; he never speaks but in the imperative mood. When he stands on his Quarter-deck at sea, he absolutely commands as far as eye can reach. Only the moon and stars are beyond his jurisdiction. He is lord and master of the sun.

It is not twelve o'clock till he says so. For when the sailing-master, whose duty it is to take the regular observation at noon, touches his hat, and reports twelve o'clock to the officer of the deck, that functionary orders a midshipman to repair to the captain's cabin, and humbly inform him of the respectful suggestion of the sailing-master.

"Twelve o'clock reported, sir," says the middy.

"*Make it so,*" replies the captain.

And the bell is struck eight by the messenger-boy, and twelve o'clock it is.

As in the case of the Commodore, when the captain visits the deck, his subordinate officers generally beat a retreat to the other side; and, as a general rule, would no more think of addressing him, except concerning the ship, than a lackey would think of hailing the Czar of Russia on his throne, and inviting him to tea. Perhaps no mortal man has more reason to feel such an intense sense of his own personal consequence, as the captain of a man-of-war at sea.

Next in rank comes the First or Senior Lieutenant, the chief executive officer. I have no reason to love

the particular gentleman who filled that post aboard of our frigate, for it was he who refused my petition for as much black paint as would render water-proof that white-jacket of mine. All my soakings and drenchings lie at his state-room door. I hardly think I shall ever forgive him ; every twinge of the rheumatism, which I still occasionally feel, is directly referable to him. The Immortals have a reputation for clemency : and *they* may pardon him ; but he must not dun me to be merciful. But my personal feelings toward the man shall not prevent me from here doing him justice. In most things, he was an excellent seaman ; prompt, loud, and to the point ; and as such, was well fitted for his station. The First Lieutenancy of a frigate demands a good disciplinarian, and, every way, an energetic man. By the captain he is held responsible for every thing ; by that magnate, indeed, he is supposed to be omnipresent ; down in the hold, and up aloft, at one and the same time.

He presides at the head of the Ward-room officers' table, who are so called from their messing together in a part of the ship thus designated. In a frigate it comprises the after-part of the berth-deck. Sometimes it goes by the name of the Gun-room, but oftener is called the Ward-room. Within, this Ward-room much resembles a long, wide corridor in a large hotel ; numerous doors opening on both hands to the private apartments of the officers. The first time I had a look at it, the

Chaplain was seated at the table in the centre, playing chess with the Lieutenant of Marines. It was mid-day, but the place was lighted by lamps.

Besides the First Lieutenant, the Ward-room officers include the junior lieutenants, in a frigate six or seven in number, the Sailing-master, Purser, Chaplain, Surgeon, Marine officers, and Midshipmen's Schoolmaster, or "the Professor." They generally form a very agreeable club of good fellows; from their diversity of character, admirably calculated to form an agreeable social whole. The Lieutenants discuss sea-fights, and tell anecdotes of Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton; the Marine officers talk of storming fortresses, and the siege of Gibraltar; the Purser steadies this wild conversation by occasional allusions to the rule of three; the Professor is always charged with a scholarly reflection, or an apt line from the classics, generally Ovid: the Surgeon's stories of the amputation-table judiciously serve to suggest the mortality of the whole party as men; while the good chaplain stands ready at all times to give them pious counsel and consolation.

Of course these gentlemen all associate on a footing of perfect social equality.

Next in order come the Warrant or Forward officers, consisting of the Boatswain, Gunner, Carpenter, and Sail-maker. Though these worthies sport long coats, and wear the anchor-button, yet in the estimation of the ward-room officers, they are not, technically speak-

ing, rated gentlemen. The First Lieutenant, Chaplain, or Surgeon, for example, would never dream of inviting them to dinner. In sea parlance, "they come in at the hawse-holes;" they have hard hands; and the carpenter and sail-maker practically understand the duties which they are called upon to superintend. They mess by themselves. Invariably four in number, they never have need to play whist with a dummy.

In this part of the category now come the "reefers," otherwise "middies," or midshipmen. These boys are sent to sea, for the purpose of making commodores; and in order to become commodores, many of them deem it indispensable forthwith to commence chewing tobacco, drinking brandy and water, and swearing at the sailors. As they are only placed on board a sea-going ship to go to school and learn the duty of a Lieutenant; and until qualified to act as such, have few or no special functions to attend to; they are little more, while midshipmen, than supernumeraries on board. Hence, in a crowded frigate, they are so everlastingly crossing the path of both men and officers, that in the navy it has become a proverb, that a useless fellow is "*as much in the way as a reefer.*"

In a gale of wind, when all hands are called, and the deck swarms with men, the little "middies" running about distracted, and having nothing particular to do, make it up in vociferous swearing; exploding all about under foot like torpedoes. Some of them are terrible

little boys, cocking their caps at alarming angles, and looking fierce as young roosters. They are generally great consumers of Macassar Oil and the Balm of Columbia: they thirst and rage after whiskers; and sometimes, applying their ointments, lay themselves out in the sun, to promote the fertility of their chins.

As the only way to learn to command, is to learn to obey, the usage of a ship of war is such that the midshipmen are constantly being ordered about by the Lieutenants; though, without having assigned them their particular destinations, they are always going somewhere, and never arriving. In some things they almost have a harder time of it than the seamen themselves. They are messengers and errand-boys to their superiors.

"Mr. Pert," cries an officer of the deck, hailing a young gentleman forward. Mr. Pert advances, touches his hat, and remains in an attitude of deferential suspense. "Go and tell the boatswain I want him." And with this dignified errand the middy hurries away, looking proud as a king.

The middies live by themselves in the steerage, where, nowadays, they dine off a table, spread with a cloth. They have a castor at dinner; they have some other little boys (selected from the ship's company) to wait upon them; they sometimes drink coffee out of china. But for all these, their modern refinements, in some instances the affairs of their club go sadly to rack

and ruin. The china is broken; the japanned coffee-pot dented like a pewter mug in an ale-house; the pronged forks resemble toothpicks (for which they are sometimes used); the table-knives are hacked into hand-saws; and the cloth goes to the sail-maker to be patched. Indeed, they are something like collegiate freshmen and sophomores, living in the college buildings, especially so far as the noise they make in their quarters is concerned. The steerage buzzes, hums, and swarms like a hive; or like an infant-school of a hot day, when the schoolmistress falls asleep with a fly on her nose.

In frigates, the ward-room—the retreat of the Lieutenants—immediately adjoining the steerage, is on the same deck with it. Frequently, when the middies, waking early of a morning, as most youngsters do, would be kicking up their heels in their hammocks, or running about in double-reefed night-gowns, playing *tag* among the “clews;” the Senior Lieutenant would burst among them with a—“Young gentlemen, I am astonished. You must stop this sky-larking. Mr. Pert, what are you doing at the table there, without your pantaloons? To your hammock, sir. Let me see no more of this. If you disturb the ward-room again, young gentlemen, you shall hear of it.” And so saying, this hoary-headed Senior Lieutenant would retire to his cot in his state-room, like the father of a numerous family after getting up in his dressing-gown and

slippers, to quiet a daybreak tumult in his populous nursery.

Having now descended from Commodore to Middy, we come lastly to a set of nondescripts, forming also a "mess" by themselves, apart from the seamen. Into this mess, the usage of a man-of-war thrusts various subordinates—including the master-at-arms, purser's steward, ship's corporals, marine sergeants, and ship's yeomen, forming the first aristocracy above the sailors.

The master-at-arms is a sort of high constable and schoolmaster, wearing citizen's clothes, and known by his official rattan. He it is whom all sailors hate. His, is the universal duty of a universal informer and hunter-up of delinquents. On the berth-deck he reigns supreme; spying out all grease-spots made by the various cooks of the seamen's messes, and driving the laggards up the hatches, when all hands are called. It is indispensable that he should be a very Vidocq in vigilance. But as it is a heartless, so is it a thankless office. Of dark nights, most masters-of-arms keep themselves in readiness to dodge forty-two pound balls, dropped down the hatchways near them.

The ship's corporals are this worthy's deputies and ushers.

The marine sergeants are generally tall fellows with unyielding spines and stiff upper lips, and very exclusive in their tastes and predilections.

The ship's yeoman is a gentleman who has a sort of counting-room in a tar-cellar down in the fore-hold. More will we said of him anon.

Except the officers above enumerated, there are none who mess apart from the seamen. The "*petty officers*," so called; that is, the Boatswain's, Gunner's, Carpenter's, and Sail-maker's mates, the Captains of the Tops, of the Forecastle, and of the After-Guard, and of the Fore and Main holds, and the Quarter-Masters, all mess in common with the crew, and in the American navy are only distinguished from the common seamen by their slightly additional pay. But in the English navy they wear crowns and anchors worked on the sleeves of their jackets, by way of badges of office. In the French navy they are known by strips of worsted worn in the same place, like those designating the Sergeants and Corporals in the army.

Thus it will be seen, that the dinner-table is the criterion of rank in our man-of-war world. The Commodore dines alone, because he is the only man of his rank in the ship. So too with the Captain; and the Ward-room officers, warrant officers, midshipmen, the master-at-arms' mess, and the common seamen;—all of them, respectively, dine together, because they are respectively on a footing of equality.

For the same reason, the Commodore has his own steward and cook, who wait upon nobody but him; also his own stove, where nothing is cooked but for his

meals. So, too, with the Captain. The ward-room officers, also, have their own steward and cook ; also, the midshipmen. The cooking for these two classes is done at a distinct part of the great galley—the forward end—a place called “the range.” This is a wide grate, several feet long.

CHAPTER VII.

BREAKFAST, DINNER, AND SUPPER.

NOT only is the dinner-table a criterion of rank on board a man-of-war, but also the dinner hour. He who dines latest is the greatest man; and he who dines earliest is accounted the least. In a flag-ship, the Commodore generally dines about four or five o'clock; the Captain about three; the Lieutenants about two; while *the people** (by which phrase the common seamen are specially designated in the nomenclature of the quarter-deck), sit down to their salt beef exactly at noon.

Thus it will be seen, that while the two estates of sea-kings and sea-lords dine at rather patrician hours—and thereby, in the long run, impair their digestive functions—the sea-commoners, or “the people,” keep up their constitutions, by keeping up the good old-fashioned dinner-hour of twelve.

Twelve o'clock! It is the natural centre, key-stone and very heart of the day. At that hour, the sun has arrived at the top of his hill; and as he seems to hang poised there awhile, before coming down on the other side, it is but reasonable to suppose that he is then

* In the same nomenclature, they are also especially designated as “the men.”

stopping to dine ; setting an eminent example to all mankind. The rest of the day is called *afternoon* ; the very sound of which fine old Saxon word conveys a feeling of the lee bulwarks and a nap ; a summer-sea—soft breezes creeping over it ; dreamy dolphins gliding in the distance. *Afternoon* ! the word implies that it is an after-piece, coming after the grand drama of the day ; something to be taken leisurely and lazily. But how can this be, if you dine at five ? For, after all, though *Paradise Lost* be a noble poem, and we man-of-war's men, no doubt, largely partake in the immortality of the immortals ; yet, let us candidly confess it, shipmates, that upon the whole, our dinners are the most momentous affairs of these lives we lead beneath the moon. What were a day without a dinner ? a dinnerless day ! such a day had better be a night.

Again : twelve o'clock is the natural hour for us man-of-war's men to dine, because at that hour the very time-pieces we have invented arrive at their terminus ; they can get no further than twelve ; when straightway they continue their old rounds again. Doubtless, Adam and Eve dined at twelve ; and the Patriarch Abraham in the midst of his cattle ; and old Job with his noon mowers and reapers, in that grand plantation of Uz ; and old Noah himself, in the Ark, must have gone to dinner at precisely *eight bells* (noon), with all his floating families and farm-yards.

But though this antediluvian dinner hour is rejected by modern Commodores and Captains, it still lingers among "the people" under their command. Many sensible things banished from high life find an asylum among the mob.

Some Commodores are very particular in seeing to it, that no man on board the ship dare to dine after his (the Commodore's) own dessert is cleared away.—Not even the Captain. It is said, on good authority, that a Captain once ventured to dine at five, when the Commodore's hour was four. Next day, as the story goes, that Captain received a private note; and in consequence of that note, dined for the future at half-past three.

Though in respect of the dinner hour on board a man-of-war, "the people" have no reason to complain; yet they have just cause, almost for mutiny, in the outrageous hours assigned for their breakfast and supper.

Eight o'clock for breakfast; twelve for dinner; four for supper; and no meals but these; no lunches and no cold snacks. Owing to this arrangement (and partly to one watch going to their meals before the other, at sea), all the meals of the twenty-four hours are crowded into a space of less than eight! Sixteen mortal hours elapse between supper and breakfast; including, to one watch, eight hours on deck! This is barbarous; any physician will tell you so. Think of it! Before the Commodore has dined, you have

supped. And in high latitudes, in summer-time, you have taken your last meal for the day, and five hours, or more, daylight to spare !

Mr. Secretary of the Navy, in the name of "the people" you should interpose in this matter. Many a time have I, a main-top-man, found myself actually faint of a tempestuous morning watch, when all my energies were demanded—owing to this miserable, unphilosophical mode of allotting the government meals at sea. We beg of you, Mr. Secretary, not to be swayed in this matter by the Honourable Board of Commodores, who will no doubt tell you that eight, twelve, and four are the proper hours for "the people" to take their meals ; inasmuch, as at these hours the watches are relieved. For, though this arrangement makes a neater and cleaner thing of it for the officers, and looks very nice and superfine on paper, yet it is plainly detrimental to health, and in time of war is attended with still more serious consequences to the whole nation at large. If the necessary researches were made, it would perhaps be found that in those instances where men-of-war adopting the above-mentioned hours for meals have encountered an enemy at night, they have pretty generally been beaten ; that is, in those cases where the enemies' meal times were reasonable ; which is only to be accounted for by the fact, that "the people" of the beaten vessels were fighting on an empty stomach instead of a full one.

CHAPTER VIII.

SELVAGEE CONTRASTED WITH MAD-JACK.

HAVING glanced at the grand divisions of a man-of-war, let us now descend to specialities; and, particularly, to two of the junior lieutenants; lords and noblemen; members of that House of Peers, the gun-room. There were several young lieutenants on board; but from these two—representing the extremes of character to be found in their department—the nature of the other officers of their grade in the *Neversink* must be derived.

One of these two quarter-deck lords went among the sailors by a name of their own devising—*Selvagee*. Of course, it was intended to be characteristic; and even so it was.

In frigates, and all large ships of war, when getting under weigh, a large rope, called a *messenger*, is used to carry the strain of the cable to the capstan; so that the anchor may be weighed, without the muddy, ponderous cable itself going round the capstan. As the cable enters the hawse-hole, therefore, something must be constantly used to keep this travelling chain attached to this travelling *messenger*; something that may be rapidly wound round both, so as to bind them together.

The article used is called a *selvagee*. And what could be better adapted to the purpose? It is a slender, tapering, unstranded piece of rope; prepared with much solicitude; peculiarly flexible; and wreathes and serpentines round the cable and messenger like an elegantly-modeled garter-snake round the twisted stalks of a vine. Indeed, *Selvagee* is the exact type and symbol of a tall, genteel, limber, spiralizing exquisite. So much for the derivation of the name which the sailors applied to the Lieutenant.

From what sea-alcove, from what mermaid's milliner's shop, hast thou emerged, *Selvagee*! with that dainty waist and languid cheek? What heartless step-dame drove thee forth, to waste thy fragrance on the salt sea-air?

Was it *you*, *Selvagee*! that, outward-bound, off Cape Horn, looked at Hermit Island through an Opera-glass? Was it *you*, who thought of proposing to the Captain, that when the sails were furled in a gale, a few drops of lavender should be dropped in their "bunts," so that when the canvass was set again, your nostrils might not be offended by its musty smell? I do not say it was you, *Selvagee*; I but deferentially inquire.

In plain prose, *Selvagee* was one of those officers whom the sight of a trim-fitting naval coat had captivated in the days of his youth. He fancied, that if a sea-officer dressed well, and conversed genteelly, he

would abundantly uphold the honour of his flag, and immortalize the tailor that made him. On that rock many young gentlemen split. For upon a frigate's quarter-deck, it is not enough to sport a coat fashioned by a Stultz; it is not enough to be well braced with straps and suspenders; it is not enough to have sweet reminiscences of Lauras and Matildas. It is a right down life of hard wear and tear, and the man who is not, in a good degree, fitted to become a common sailor will never make an officer. Take that to heart, all ye naval aspirants. Thrust your arms up to the elbow in pitch, and see how you like it, ere you solicit a warrant. Prepare for white squalls, living gales and Typhoons; read accounts of shipwrecks and horrible disasters; peruse the Narratives of Byron and Bligh; familiarize yourselves with the story of the English frigate *Alceste*, and the French frigate *Medusa*. Though you may go ashore, now and then, at Cadiz and Palermo; for every day so spent among oranges and ladies, you will have whole months of rains and gales.

And even thus did Selvagee prove it. But with all the intrepid effeminacy of your true dandy, he still continued his Cologne-water baths, and sported his lace-bordered handkerchiefs in the very teeth of a tempest. Alas, Selvagee! there was no getting the lavender out of you.

But Selvagee was no fool. Theoretically he understood his profession; but the mere theory of seamanship

forms but the thousandth part of what makes a seaman. You cannot save a ship by working out a problem in the cabin ; the deck is the field of action.

Well aware of his deficiency in some things, Selvagee never took the trumpet—which is the badge of the deck officer for the time—without a tremulous movement of the lip, and an earnest, inquiring eye to the windward. He encouraged those old Tritons, the Quarter-masters, to discourse with him concerning the likelihood of a squall ; and often followed their advice as to taking in, or making sail. The smallest favours in that way were thankfully received. Sometimes, when all the North looked unusually lowering, by many conversational blandishments, he would endeavour to prolong his predecessor's stay on deck, after that officer's watch had expired. But in fine, steady weather, when the Captain would emerge from his cabin, Selvagee might be seen, pacing the poop with long, bold, indefatigable strides, and casting his eye up aloft with the most ostentatious fidelity.

But vain these pretences ; he could not deceive. Selvagee ! you know very well, that if it comes on to blow pretty hard, the First Lieutenant will be sure to interfere with his paternal authority. Every man and every boy in the frigate knows, Selvagee, that you are no Neptune.

How unenviable his situation ! His brother officers do not insult him, to be sure ; but sometimes their

looks are as daggers. The sailors do not laugh at him outright; but of dark nights they jeer, when they hearken to that mantua-maker's voice ordering *a strong pull at the main brace, or hands by the halyards!* Sometimes, by way of being terrific, and making the men jump, Selvagee raps out an oath; but the soft bomb stuffed with confectioner's kisses seems to burst like a crushed rose-bud diffusing its odours. Selvagee! Selvagee! take a main-top-man's advice; and this cruise over, never more tempt the sea.

With this gentleman of cravats and curling irons, how strongly contrasts the man who was born in a gale! For in some time of tempest—off Cape Horn or Hatteras—*Mad Jack* must have entered the world—such things have been—not with a silver spoon, but with a speaking trumpet in his mouth; wrapped up in a caul, as in a main-sail—for a charmed life against shipwrecks he bears—and crying, *Luff! luff, you may!—steady!—port! World ho!—here I am!*

Mad Jack is in his saddle on the sea. *That* is his home; he would not care much, if another Flood came and overflowed the dry land; for what would it do but float his good ship higher and higher, and carry his proud nation's flag round the globe, over the very capitals of all hostile states! Then would masts surmount spires; and all mankind, like the Chinese boatmen in Canton River, live in flotillas and fleets, and find their food in the sea.

Mad Jack was expressly created and labelled for a tar. Five feet nine is his mark, in his socks ; and not weighing over eleven stone before dinner. Like so many ship's shrouds, his muscles and tendons are all set true, trim, and taut ; he is braced up fore and aft, like a ship on the wind. His broad chest is a bulk-head, that dams off the gale ; and his nose is an aquiline, that divides it in two, like a keel. His loud, lusty lungs are two belfries, full of all manner of chimes ; but you only hear his deepest bray, in the height of some tempest—like the great bell of St. Paul's, which only sounds when the King or the Devil is dead.

Look at him there, where he stands on the poop—one foot on the rail, and one hand on a shroud—his head thrown back, and his trumpet like an elephant's trunk thrown up in the air. Is he going to shoot dead with sound, those fellows on the main-topsail-yard ?

Mad Jack was a bit of a tyrant—they say all good officers are—but the sailors loved him all round ; and would much rather stand fifty watches with him, than one with a rose-water sailor.

But Mad Jack, alas ! has one fearful failing. He drinks. And so do we all. But Mad Jack, he only drinks brandy. The vice was inveterate ; surely, like Ferdinand, Count Fathom, he must have been suckled at a puncheon. Very often, this bad habit got him into very serious scrapes. Twice was he put off duty by the Commodore ; and once he came near being

broken for his frolics. So far as his efficiency as a sea officer was concerned, on shore at least, Jack might *bouse away* as much as he pleased ; but afloat it will not do at all.

Now, if he only followed the wise example set by those ships of the desert, the camels ; and while in port, drank for the thirst past, the thirst present, and the thirst to come—so that he might cross the ocean sober ; Mad Jack would get along pretty well. Still better, if he would but eschew brandy altogether ; and only drink of the limpid white-wine of the rills and the brooks.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE POCKETS THAT WERE IN THE JACKET.

I MUST make some further mention of that white jacket of mine.

And here be it known—by way of introduction to what is to follow—that to a common sailor, the living on board a man-of-war is like living in a market ; where you dress on the door-steps and sleep in the cellar. No privacy can you have ; hardly one moment's seclusion. It is almost a physical impossibility, that you can ever be alone. You dine at a vast *table d'hôte* ; sleep in commons, and make your toilet where and when you can. There is no calling for a mutton-chop and a pint of claret by yourself ; no selecting of chambers for the night ; no hanging of pantaloons over the back of a chair ; no ringing your bell of a rainy morning, to take your coffee in bed. It is something like life in a large manufactory. The bell strikes to dinner, and hungry or not, you must dine.

Your clothes are stowed in a large canvas bag, generally painted black, which you can get out of the "rack" only once in the twenty-four hours ; and then, during the time of the utmost confusion ; among five hundred other bags, with five hundred other sailors

diving into each, in the midst of the twilight of the berth-deck. In some measure to obviate this inconvenience, many sailors divide their wardrobes between their hammocks and their bags; stowing a few frocks and trowsers in the former; so that they can shift at night, if they wish, when the hammocks are piped down. But they gain very little by this.

You have no place whatever but your bag or hammock, in which to put any thing in a man-of-war. If you lay any thing down, and turn your back for a moment, ten to one it is gone.

Now, in sketching the preliminary plan, and laying out the foundation of that memorable white jacket of mine, I had had an earnest eye to all these inconveniences, and resolved to avoid them. I proposed, that not only should my jacket keep me warm, but that it should also be so constructed as to contain a shirt or two, a pair of trowsers, and divers knickknacks—sewing utensils, books, biscuits, and the like. With this object, I had accordingly provided it with a great variety of pockets, pantries, clothes-presses, and cupboards.

The principal apartments, two in number, were placed in the skirts, with a wide, hospitable entrance from the inside; two more, of smaller capacity, were planted in each breast, with folding-doors communicating, so that in case of emergency, to accommodate any bulky articles, the two pockets in each breast could be thrown into one. There were, also, several unseen recesses

behind the arras ; insomuch, that my jacket, like an old castle, was full of winding stairs, and mysterious closets, crypts, and, cabinets ; and like a confidential writing-desk, abounded in snug little out-of-the-way lairs and hiding-places, for the storage of valuables.

Superadded to these, were four capacious pockets on the outside ; one pair to slip books into when suddenly started from my studies to the main-royal-yard ; and the other pair, for permanent mittens, to thrust my hands into of a cold night-watch. This last contrivance was regarded as needless by one of my top-mates, who showed me a pattern for sea-mittens, which he said was much better than mine.

It must be known, that sailors, even in the bleakest weather, only cover hands when unemployed ; they never wear mittens aloft ; since aloft, they literally carry their lives in their hands, and want nothing between their grasp of the hemp and the hemp itself.—Therefore, it is desirable, that whatever things they cover their hands with, should be capable of being slipped on and off in a moment. Nay, it is desirable that they should be of such a nature, that in a dark night, when you are in a great hurry—say, going to the helm—they may be jumped into, indiscriminately ; and not be like a pair of right-and-left kids ; neither of which will admit any hand, but the particular one meant for it.

My top-mate's contrivance was this—he ought to have got out a patent for it—each of his mittens was

provided with two thumbs, one on each side ; the convenience of which needs no comment. But though for clumsy seamen, whose fingers are all thumbs, this description of mitten might do very well, White-Jacket did not so much fancy it. For when your hand was once in the bag of the mitten, the empty thumb-hole sometimes dangled at your palm, confounding your ideas of where your real thumb might be ; or else, being carefully grasped in the hand, was continually suggesting the insane notion, that you were all the while having hold of some one else's thumb.

No ; I told my good top-mate to go away with his four thumbs, I would have nothing to do with them ; two thumbs were enough for any man.

For some time after completing my jacket, and getting the furniture and household stores in it, I thought that nothing could exceed it for convenience. Seldom now did I have occasion to go to my bag, and be jostled by the crowd who were making their wardrobe in a heap. If I wanted anything in the way of clothing, thread, needles, or literature, the chances were that my invaluable jacket contained it. Yes : I fairly hugged myself, and revelled in my jacket ; till alas ! a long rain put me out of conceit of it. I, and all my pantries and their contents, were soaked through and through, and my pocket-edition of Shakspeare was reduced to an omelet.

However, availing myself of a fine sunny day that followed, I emptied myself out in the main-top, and

spread all my goods and chattels to dry. But spite of the bright sun, that day proved a black one. The scoundrels on deck detected me in the act of discharging my saturated cargo ; they now knew that the white jacket was used for a store-house. The consequence was, that my goods being well dried and again stored away in my pockets ; the very next night, when it was my quarter-watch on deck, and not in the top (where they were all honest men), I noticed a parcel of fellows skulking about after me wherever I went. To a man, they were pickpockets, and bent upon pillaging me. In vain I kept clapping my pockets like nervous old gentlemen in a crowd ; that same night I found myself minus several valuable articles. So, in the end, I masoned up my lockers and pantries ; and save the two used for mittens, the white jacket ever after was pocketless.

CHAPTER X.

FROM POCKETS TO PICKPOCKETS.

As the latter part of the preceding chapter may seem strange to those landmen, who have been habituated to indulge in high-raised, romantic notions of the man-of-war's man's character, it may not be amiss to set down here certain facts on this head, which may serve to place the thing in its true light.

From the wild life they lead, and various other causes (needless to mention), sailors, as a class, entertain the most liberal notions concerning morality and the Decalogue; or, rather, they take their own views of such matters, caring little for the theological or ethical definitions of others concerning what may be criminal, or wrong.

Their ideas are much swayed by circumstances. They will covertly abstract a thing from one whom they dislike; and insist upon it, that, in such a case, stealing is no robbing. Or, where the theft involves something funny, as in the case of the white jacket, they only steal for the sake of the joke; but this much is to be observed nevertheless, *i. e.*, that they never spoil the joke by returning the stolen article.

It is a good joke, for instance, and one often perpetrated on board ship, to stand talking to a man in a dark night-watch, and all the while be cutting the buttons from his coat. But once off, those buttons never grow on again. There is no spontaneous vegetation in buttons.

Perhaps it is a thing unavoidable, but the truth is, that among the crew of a man-of-war, scores of desperadoes are too often found, who stop not at the largest enormities. A species of highway robbery is not unknown to them. A *gang* will be informed, that such a fellow has three or four gold pieces in the monkey-bag, so called, or purse, which many tars wear round their necks, tucked out of sight. Upon this, they deliberately lay their plans, and in due time proceed to carry them into execution. The man they have marked is perhaps strolling along the benighted berth-deck to his mess-chest; when, of a sudden, the foot-pads dash out from their hiding place, throw him down, and while two or three gag him and hold him fast, another cuts the bag from his neck, and makes away with it, followed by his comrades. This was more than once done in the *Neversink*.

At other times, hearing that a sailor has something valuable secreted in his hammock; they will rip it open from underneath while he sleeps, and reduce the conjecture to a certainty.

To enumerate all the minor pilferings on board a

man-of-war would be endless. With some highly commendable exceptions, they rob from one another, and rob back again, till, in the matter of small things, a community of goods seems almost established ; and at last, as a whole, they become relatively honest, by nearly every man becoming the reverse. It is in vain that the officers, by threats of condign punishment, endeavour to instil more virtuous principles into their crew ; so thick is the mob, that not one thief in a thousand is detected.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PURSUIT OF POETRY UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

THE feeling of insecurity concerning one's possessions in the Neversink, which the things just narrated begat in the minds of honest men, was curiously exemplified in the case of my poor friend Lemsford, a gentlemanly young member of the After-Guard. I had very early made the acquaintance of Lemsford. It is curious, how unerringly a man pitches upon a spirit, any way akin to his own, even in the most miscellaneous mob.

Lemsford was a poet; so thoroughly inspired with the divine afflatus, that not even all the tar and tumult of a man-of-war could drive it out of him.

As may readily be imagined, the business of writing verse is a very different thing on the gun-deck of a frigate, from what the gentle and sequestered Wordsworth found it at placid Rydal Mount, in Westmoreland. In a frigate, you cannot sit down and meander off your sonnets, when the full heart prompts; but only, when more important duties permit: such as bracing round the yards, or reefing top-sails fore and aft. Nevertheless, every fragment of time at his command was religiously devoted by Lemsford to the Nine. At the most unseasonable hours, you would behold him, seated apart, in

some corner among the guns—a shot-box before him, pen in hand, and eyes “*in a fine frenzy rolling.*”

“What’s that ’ere born nat’ral about?”—“He’s got a fit, hain’t he?” were exclamations often made by the less learned of his shipmates. Some deemed him a conjuror; others a lunatic; and the knowing ones said, that he must be a crazy Methodist. But well knowing by experience the truth of the saying, that *poetry is its own exceeding great reward*, Lemsford wrote on; dashing off whole epics, sonnets, ballads, and acrostics, with a facility which, under the circumstances, amazed me. Often he read over his effusions to me; and well worth the hearing they were. He had wit, imagination, feeling, and humour in abundance; and out of the very ridicule with which some persons regarded him, he made rare metrical sport, which we two together enjoyed by ourselves, or shared with certain select friends.

Still, the taunts and jeers so often levelled at my fine friend the poet, would now and then rouse him into rage; and at such times, the haughty scorn he would hurl on his foes, was proof positive of his possession of that one attribute, irritability, almost universally ascribed to the votaries of Parnassus and the Nine.

My noble Captain, Jack Chase, rather patronised Lemsford, and he would stoutly take his part against scores of adversaries. Frequently inviting him up aloft into his top, he would beg him to recite some of his

verses; to which he would pay the most heedful attention, like Mæcenas listening to Virgil, with a book of the *Æneid* in his hand. Taking the liberty of a well-wisher, he would sometimes gently criticise the piece, suggesting a few immaterial alterations. And upon my word, noble Jack, with his native-born good sense, taste, and humanity, was not ill qualified to play the true part of a *Quarterly Review*;—which is, to give quarter at last, however severe the critique.

Now Lemsford's great care, anxiety, and endless source of tribulation was the preservation of his manuscripts. He had a little box, about the size of a small dressing-case, and secured with a lock, in which he kept his papers and stationary. This box, of course, he could not keep in his bag or hammock, for, in either case, he would only be able to get at it once in the twenty-four hours. It was necessary to have it accessible at all times. So when not using it, he was obliged to hide it out of sight, where he could. And of all places in the world, a ship of war, above her *hold*, least abounds in secret nooks. Almost every inch is occupied; almost every inch is in plain sight; and almost every inch is continually being visited and explored. Added to all this, was the deadly hostility of the whole tribe of ship-underlings—master-at-arms, ship's-corporals, and boat-swain's mates—both to the poet and his casket. They hated his box, as if it had been Pandora's, crammed to the very lid with hurricanes and gales. They hunted

out his hiding-places like pointers, and gave him no peace night or day.

Still, the long twenty-four pounders on the main-deck offered some promise of a hiding place to the box; and, accordingly, it was often tucked away behind the carriages, among the side tackles; its black colour blending with the ebon hue of the guns.

But Quoin, one of the quarter-gunners, had eyes like a ferret. Quoin was a little old man-of-war's man, hardly five feet high, with a complexion like a gun-shot wound after it is healed. He was indefatigable in attending to his duties; which consisted in taking care of one division of the guns, embracing ten of the aforesaid twenty-four-pounders. Ranged up against the ship's side at regular intervals, they resembled not a little a stud of sable chargers in their stalls. Among this iron stud little Quoin was continually running in and out, currying them down, now and then, with an old rag, or keeping the flies off with a brush. To Quoin, the honour and dignity of the United States of America seemed indissolubly linked with the keeping his guns unspotted and glossy. He himself was black as a chimney-sweep with continually tending them, and rubbing them down with black paint. He would sometimes get outside of the port-holes and peer into the muzzles, as a monkey into a bottle. Or, like a dentist, he seemed intent upon examining their teeth. Quite as often, he would be brushing out their touch-holes with a little wisp of

oakum, like a Chinese barber in Canton, cleaning a patient's ear.

Such was his solicitude, that it was a thousand pities he was not able to dwarf himself still more, so as to creep in at the touch-hole, and examining the whole interior of the tube, emerge at last from the muzzle. Quoin swore by his guns, and slept by their side. Woe betide the man whom he found leaning against them, or in any way soiling them. He seemed seized with the crazy fancy, that his darling twenty-four-pounders were fragile, and might break, like glass retorts.

Now, from this Quoin's vigilance, how could my poor friend the poet hope to escape with his box? Twenty times a week it was pounced upon, with a "here's that d—d pill-box again!" and a loud threat, to pitch it overboard the next time, without a moment's warning, or benefit of clergy. Like many poets, Lemsford was nervous, and upon these occasions he trembled like a leaf. Once, with an inconsolable countenance he came to me, saying that his casket was nowhere to be found; he had sought for it in his hiding-place, and it was not there.

I asked him where he had hidden it?

"Among the guns," he replied.

"Then depend upon it, Lemsford, that Quoin has been the death of it."

Straight to Quoin went the poet. But Quoin knew

nothing about it. For ten mortal days the poet was not to be comforted ; dividing his leisure time between cursing Quoin and lamenting his loss. The world is undone, he must have thought ; no such calamity has befallen it since the Deluge ;—my verses are perished.

But though Quoin, as it afterwards turned out, had indeed found the box, it so happened that he had not destroyed it ; which no doubt led Lemsford to infer that a superintending Providence had interposed to preserve to posterity his invaluable casket. It was found at last lying exposed near the galley.

Lemsford was not the only literary man on board the *Neversink*. There were three or four persons who kept journals of the cruise. One of these journalists embellished his work—which was written in a large blank account book—with various coloured illustrations of the harbours and bays at which the frigate had touched ; and also, with small crayon sketches of comical incidents on board the frigate itself. He would frequently read passages of his book to an admiring circle of the more refined sailors between the guns. They pronounced the whole performance a miracle of art. As the author declared to them that it was all to be printed and published so soon as the vessel reached home, they vied with each other in procuring interesting items, to be incorporated into additional chapters. But it having been rumoured abroad that this journal was to be ominously entitled “ *The Cruise of the Neversink, or*

a Paixhan Shot into Naval Abuses ;” and it having also reached the ears of the Ward-room that the work contained reflections somewhat derogatory to the dignity of the officers, the volume was seized by the master-at-arms, armed with a warrant from the Captain. A few days after, a large nail was driven straight through the two covers, and clinched on the other side, and, thus everlastingly sealed, the book was committed to the deep. The ground taken by the authorities on this occasion was, perhaps, that the book was obnoxious to a certain clause in the Articles of War, forbidding any person in the navy to bring any other person in the navy into contempt, which the suppressed volume undoubtedly did.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GOOD OR BAD TEMPER OF MAN-OF-WAR'S MEN, IN A GREAT DEGREE, ATTRIBUTABLE TO THEIR PARTICULAR STATIONS AND DUTIES ABOARD SHIP.

QUOIN, the quarter-gunner, was the representative of a class on board the *Neversink*, altogether too remarkable to be left astern, without further notice, in the rapid wake of these chapters.

As has been seen, Quoin was full of unaccountable whimsies; he was, withal, a very cross, bitter, ill-natured, inflammable little old man. So, too, were all the members of the gunner's gang, including the two gunner's mates, and all the quarter-gunners. Every one of them had the same dark brown complexion; all their faces looked like smoked hams. They were continually grumbling and growling about the batteries; running in and out among the guns; driving the sailors away from them; and cursing and swearing as if all their consciences had been powder-singed and made callous by their calling. Indeed they were a most unpleasant set of men, especially Priming, the nasal-voiced gunner's mate, with the hare-lip; and Cylinder, his stuttering coadjutor, with the clubbed foot. But you will always observe, that the gunner's gang of every man-of-war are invariably ill-tempered, ugly featured,

and quarrelsome. Once when I visited an English line-of-battle ship, the gunner's gang were at work fore and aft, polishing up the batteries, which, according to the admiral's fancy, had been painted white as snow. Fidgeting round the great thirty-two pounders, and making stinging remarks at the sailors and each other, they reminded one of a swarm of black wasps, buzzing about rows of white head-stones in a churchyard.

Now, there can be little doubt that their being so much among the guns is the very thing that makes a gunner's gang so cross and quarrelsome. Indeed, this was once proved to the satisfaction of our whole company of main-top-men. A fine top-mate of ours, a most merry and companionable fellow, chanced to be promoted to a quarter-gunner's berth. A few days afterwards, some of us main-top-men, his old comrades, went to pay him a visit, while he was going his regular rounds through the division of guns allotted to his care. But instead of greeting us with his usual heartiness, and cracking his pleasant jokes, to our amazement he did little else but scowl ; and at last, when we rallied him upon his ill-temper, he seized a long black rammer from overhead, and drove us on deck, threatening to report us if we ever dared to be familiar with him again.

My top-mates thought that this remarkable metamorphose was the effect produced upon a weak, vain character, suddenly elevated from the level of a mere seaman to the dignified position of a *petty officer*. But

though, in similar cases, I had seen such effects produced upon some of the crew, yet, in the present instance, I knew better than that;—it was solely brought about by his consorting with those villanous, irritable, ill-tempered cannon ; more especially from his being subject to the orders of those deformed blunderbusses, Priming and Cylinder.

The truth seems to be, indeed, that all people should be very careful in selecting their callings and vocations ; very careful in seeing to it, that they surround themselves by good-humoured, pleasant-looking objects, and agreeable, temper-soothing sounds. Many an angelic disposition has had its even edge turned, and hacked like a saw ; and many a sweet draught of piety has soured on the heart, from people's choosing ill-natured employments, and omitting to gather round them good-natured landscapes. Gardeners are almost always pleasant, affable people to converse with ; but beware of quarter-gunners, keepers of arsenals, and lonely lighthouse men. And though you will generally observe that people living in arsenals and lighthouses endeavour to cultivate a few flowers in pots, and perhaps a few cabbages in patches, by way of keeping up, if possible, some gaiety of spirits ; yet, it will not do ; their going among great guns and muskets, everlastingly mildews the blossoms of the one, and how can even cabbages thrive in a soil whereunto the mouldering keels of shipwrecked vessels have imparted the loam ?

It would be advisable for any man, who from an unlucky choice of a profession, which it is too late to change for another, should find his temper souring, to endeavour to counteract that misfortune, by filling his private chamber with amiable, pleasurable sights and sounds. In summer time an *Æolian* harp can be placed in your window at a very trifling expense; a conch-shell might stand on your mantel, to be taken up and held to the ear, that you may be soothed by its continual lulling sound, when you feel the blue fit stealing over you. For sights, a gay-painted punch-bowl, or Dutch tankard—never mind about filling it—might be recommended. It should be placed on a bracket in the pier. Nor is an old-fashioned silver ladle, nor a chased dinner-castor, nor a fine portly demijohn, nor any thing, indeed, that savours of eating and drinking, bad to drive off the spleen. But perhaps the best of all is a shelf of merrily-bound books, containing comedies, farces, songs, and humorous novels. You need never open them; only have the titles in plain sight. For this purpose, *Peregrine Pickle* is a good book; so is *Gil Blas*; so is *Goldsmith*.

But of all chamber furniture in the world, best calculated to cure a bad temper and breed a pleasant one, is the sight of a lovely wife. If you have children, however, that are teething, the nursery should be a good way upstairs; at sea, it ought to be in the mizzen-top. Indeed, teething children play the very deuce with

a husband's temper. I have known three promising young husbands completely spoil on their wives' hands, by reason of teething children, whose worrisomeness happened to be aggravated at the time by the summer complaint. With a breaking heart, and my handkerchief to my eyes, I followed those three hapless young husbands, one after the other, to their premature graves.

Gossiping scenes breed gossips. Who so chatty as hotel-clerks, market-women, auctioneers, bar-keepers, apothecaries, newspaper reporters, monthly nurses, and all those who live in bustling crowds, or are present at scenes of chatty interest?

Solitude breeds taciturnity; *that* everybody knows; who so taciturn as authors, taken as a race?

A forced, interior quietude, in the midst of great outward commotion, breeds moody people. Who so moody as rail-road breakmen, steam-boat engineers, helmsmen, and tenders of power-looms in cotton factories? For all these must hold their peace while employed, and let the machinery do the chatting; they cannot even edge in a single syllable.

Now, this theory about the wondrous influence of habitual sights and sounds upon the human temper, was suggested by my experiences on board our frigate. And although I regard the example furnished by our quarter-gunners—especially him who had once been our top-mate—as by far the strongest argument in favour of the general theory; yet the entire ship abounded

with illustrations of its truth. Who were more liberal-hearted, lofty-minded, gayer, more jocund, elastic, adventurous, given to fun and frolic, than the top-men of the fore, main, and mizzen masts? The reason of their liberal-heartedness was, that they were daily called upon to expatiate themselves all over the rigging; the reason of their lofty-mindedness was, that they were high lifted above the petty tumults, carping cares, and paltrinesses of the decks below.

And I feel persuaded in my inmost soul, that it is to the fact of my having been a main-top-man, and especially my particular post being on the loftiest yard of the frigate, the main-royal-yard, that I am now enabled to give such a free, broad, off-hand, bird's-eye, and, more than all, impartial account of our man-of-war world; withholding nothing; inventing nothing; nor flattering, nor scandalizing any; but meting out to all—commodore and messenger-boy alike—their precise descriptions and deserts.

The reason of the mirthfulness of these top-men was, that they always looked out upon the blue, boundless, dimpled, laughing, sunny sea. Nor do I hold that it militates against this theory, that of a stormy day, when the face of the ocean was black and overcast, some of them would grow moody, and chose to sit apart. On the contrary, it only proves the thing which I maintain. For even on shore there are many people, naturally gay and light-hearted, who, whenever the autumnal wind

begins to bluster round the corners, and roar along the chimney-stacks, straight become cross, petulant, and irritable. What is more mellow than fine old ale? Yet thunder will sour the best nut-brown ever brewed.

The *Holders* of our frigate, the Troglodytes, who lived down in the tarry cellars and caves below the berth-deck, were, nearly all of them, men of gloomy dispositions, taking sour views of things; one of them was a blue-light Calvinist. Whereas the old-sheet-anchors, who spent their time in the bracing sea-air and broad-cast sunshine of the fore-castle, were free, generous-hearted, charitable, and full of good-will to all hands; though some of them, to tell the truth, proved sad exceptions; but exceptions only prove the rule.

The “steady-cooks” on the berth-deck, the “steady-sweepers,” and “steady-spit-box-musterers,” in all divisions of the frigate, fore and aft, were a narrow-minded set; with contracted souls; imputable, no doubt, to their grovelling duties. More especially was this evinced in the case of those odious ditchers and night scavengers, the ignoble “Waisters.”

The members of the band, some ten or twelve in number, who had nothing to do but keep their instruments polished, and play a lively air now and then, to stir the stagnant current in our poor old Commodore's torpid veins, were the most gleeful set of fellows you ever saw. They were Portuguese, who had been shipped at the Cape de Verd Islands, on the passage out. They

messed by themselves ; forming a dinner-party, not to be exceeded in mirthfulness by a club of young bridegrooms, three months after marriage, completely satisfied with their bargains, after testing them.

But what made them, now, so full of fun? What indeed but their merry, martial, mellow calling. Who could be a churl, and play a flageolet? who mean and spiritless, braying forth the souls of thousand heroes from his brazen trumpet? But still more efficacious, perhaps, in ministering to the light spirits of the band, was the consoling thought, that should the ship ever go into action, they would be exempted from the perils of battle. In ships of war, the members of the "music," as the band is called, are generally non-combatants; and mostly ship, with the express understanding, that as soon as the vessel comes within long gun-shot of an enemy, they shall have the privilege of burrowing down in the cable-tiers, or sea coal-hole. Which shows that they are inglorious, but uncommonly sensible fellows.

Look at the barons of the gun-room—Lieutenants, Purser, Marine officers, Sailing-master—all of them gentlemen with stiff upper lips, and aristocratic cut noses. Why was this? Will any one deny, that from their living so long in high military life, served by a crowd of menial stewards and cot-boys, and always accustomed to command right and left; will any one deny, I say, that by reason of this, their very noses had become thin, peaked, aquiline, and aristocratically

cartilaginous? Even old Cuticle, the Surgeon, had a Roman nose.

But I never could account how it came to be, that our grey-headed First Lieutenant was a little lop-sided ; that is, one of his shoulders disproportionately drooped. And when I observed, that nearly all the First Lieutenants I saw in other men-of-war, besides many Second and Third Lieutenants, were similarly lop-sided ; I knew that there must be some general law which induced the phenomenon ; and I put myself to studying it out, as an interesting problem. At last, I came to the conclusion—to which I still adhere—that their so long wearing only one epaulet (for to only one does their rank entitle them) was the infallible clew to this mystery. And when any one reflects upon so well-known a fact, that many sea Lieutenants grow decrepit from age, without attaining a Captaincy and wearing *two* epaulets, which would strike the balance between their shoulders, the above reason assigned will not appear unwarrantable.

CHAPTER XIII.

A MAN-OF-WAR HERMIT IN A MOB.

THE allusion to the poet Lemsford, in a previous chapter, leads me to speak of our mutual friends, Nord and Williams, who with Lemsford himself, Jack Chase, and my comrades of the main-top, comprised almost the only persons with whom I unreservedly consorted while on board the frigate ; for I had not been long on board ere I found that it would not do to be intimate with everybody. An indiscriminate intimacy with all hands leads to sundry annoyances and scrapes, too often ending with a dozen at the gang-way. Though I was above a year in the frigate, there were scores of men who to the last remained perfect strangers to me, whose very names I did not know, and whom I would hardly be able to recognise now should I happen to meet them in the streets.

In the dog-watches at sea, during the early part of the evening, the main-deck is generally filled with crowds of pedestrians, promenading up and down past the guns, like people taking the air in Broadway. At such times, it is curious to see the men nodding to each other's recognitions (they might not have seen

each other for a week); exchanging a pleasant word with a friend; making a hurried appointment to meet him somewhere aloft on the morrow, or passing group after group without deigning the slightest salutation. Indeed, I was not at all singular in having but comparatively few acquaintances on board, though certainly carrying my fastidiousness to an unusual extent.

My friend Nord was a somewhat remarkable character; and if mystery includes romance, he certainly was a very romantic one. Before seeking an introduction to him through Lemsford, I had often marked his tall, spare, upright figure stalking like Don Quixote among the pigmies of the Afterguard to which he belonged. At first I found him exceedingly reserved and taciturn; his saturnine brow wore a scowl; he was almost repelling in his demeanour. In a word, he seemed desirous of hinting, that his list of man-of-war friends was already made up, complete, and full; and there was no room for more. But observing that the only man he ever consorted with was Lemsford, I had too much magnanimity, by going off in a pique at his coldness, to let him lose for ever the chance of making so capital an acquaintance as myself. Besides, I saw it in his eye, that the man had been a reader of good books; I would have staked my life on it, that he seized the right meaning of Montaigne. I saw that he was an earnest thinker; I more than suspected that he had been bolted in the mill of adversity. For all these things

my heart yearned toward him ; I determined to know him.

At last I succeeded ; it was during a profoundly quiet midnight watch, when I perceived him walking alone in the waist, while most of the men were dozing on the carronade-slides.

That night we scoured all the prairies of reading ; dived into the bosoms of authors, and tore out their hearts ; and that night White-Jacket learned more than he has ever done in any single night since.

The man was a marvel. He amazed me, as much as Coleridge did the troopers among whom he enlisted. What could have induced such a man to enter a man-of-war, all my sapience cannot fathom. And how he managed to preserve his dignity, as he did, among such a rabble rout was equally a mystery. For he was no sailor ; as ignorant of a ship, indeed, as a man from the sources of the Niger. Yet the officers respected him ; and the men were afraid of him. This much was observable, however, that he faithfully discharged whatever special duties devolved upon him ; and was so fortunate as never to render himself liable to a reprimand. Doubtless he took the same view of the thing that another of the crew did ; and had early resolved, so to conduct himself as never to run the risk of the scourge. And this it must have been—added to whatever incommunicable grief which might have been his—that made this Nord such a wandering recluse, even among our

man-of-war mob. Nor could he have long swung his hammock on board, ere he must have found that, to insure his exemption from that thing which alone af-frighted him, he must be content for the most part to turn a man-hater, and socially expatriate himself from many things which might have rendered his situation more tolerable. Still more, several events that took place must have horrified him, at times, with the thought that, however he might isolate and entomb himself, yet for all this, the improbability of his being overtaken by what he most dreaded never advanced to the infallibility of the impossible.

In my intercourse with Nord, he never made allusion to his past career—a subject upon which most high-bred castaways in a man-of-war are very diffuse ; relating their adventures at the gaming-table ; the recklessness with which they have run through the amplest fortunes in a single season ; their almsgivings, and gratuities to porters and poor relations ; and above all, their youth-ful indiscretions, and the broken-hearted ladies they have left behind. No such tales had Nord to tell. Concerning the past, he was barred and locked up like the specie vaults of the Bank of England. For any thing that dropped from him, none of us could be sure that he had ever existed till now. Altogether he was a remarkable man.

My other friend, Williams, was a thorough-going Yankee from Maine, who had been both a pedler and

a pedagogue in his day. He had all manner of stories to tell about nice little country frolics, and would run over an endless list of his sweethearts. He was honest, acute, witty, full of mirth and good-humour—a laughing philosopher. He was invaluable as a pill against the spleen ; and, with the view of extending the advantages of his society to the saturnine Nord, I introduced them to each other ; but Nord cut him dead the very same evening, when we sallied out from between the guns for a walk on the main-deck.

CHAPTER XIV.

A DRAUGHT IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

WE were not many days out of port, when a rumour was set afloat that dreadfully alarmed many tars. It was this: that, owing to some unprecedented oversight in the Purser, or some equally unprecedented remissness in the Naval-store-keeper at Callao, the frigate's supply of that delectable beverage, called "grog," was well-nigh expended.

In the American Navy, the law allows one gill of spirits per day to every seaman. In two portions, it is served out just previous to breakfast and dinner. At the roll of the drum, the sailors assemble round a large tub, or cask, filled with the liquid; and, as their names are called off by a midshipman, they step up and regale themselves from a little tin measure called a tot. No high-liver helping himself to Tokay off a well-polished sideboard, smacks his lips with more mighty satisfaction than the sailor does over this *tot*. To many of them, indeed, the thought of their daily *tots* forms a perpetual perspective of ravishing landscapes, indefinitely receding in the distance. It is their great "prospect in life." Take away their grog, and life possesses no further charms for them. It is hardly to be doubted, that the

controlling inducement which keeps many men in the Navy, is the unbounded confidence they have in the ability of the United States government to supply them, regularly and unfailingly, with their daily allowance of this beverage. I have known several forlorn individuals, shipping as landsmen, who have confessed to me, that having contracted a love for ardent spirits, which they could not renounce, and having by their foolish courses been brought into the most abject poverty—inasmuch that they could no longer gratify their thirst ashore—they incontinently entered the Navy; regarding it as the asylum for all drunkards, who might there prolong their lives by regular hours and exercise, and twice every day quench their thirst by moderate and undeviating doses.

When I once remonstrated with an old toper of a top-man about his daily dram-drinking; when I told him it was ruining him, and advised him to *stop his grog* and receive the money for it, in addition to his wages, as provided by law, he turned about on me with an irresistibly waggish look, and said, "Give up my grog? And why? Because it is ruining me? No, no; I am a good Christian, White-Jacket, and love my enemy too much to drop his acquaintance."

It may be readily imagined, therefore, what consternation and dismay pervaded the gun-deck at the first announcement of the tidings that the grog was expended.

"The grog gone!" roared an old Sheet-anchor-man.

"Oh! Lord! what a pain in my stomach!" cried a Main-top-man.

"It's worse than the cholera!" cried a man of the Afterguard.

"I'd sooner the water-casks would give out!" said a Captain of the Hold.

"Are we ganders and geese, that we can live without grog?" asked a Corporal of Marines.

"Ay, we must now drink with the ducks!" cried a Quarter-master.

"Not a tot left!" groaned a Waister.

"Not a toothful!" sighed a Holder, from the bottom of his boots.

Yes, the fatal intelligence proved true. The drum was no longer heard rolling the men to the tub, and deep gloom and dejection fell like a cloud. The ship was like a great city, when some terrible calamity has overtaken it. The men stood apart, in groups, discussing their woes, and mutually condoling. No longer, of still moonlight nights, was the song heard from the giddy tops; and few and far between were the stories that were told.

It was during this interval, so dismal to many, that, to the amazement of all hands, ten men were reported by the master-at-arms to be intoxicated. They were brought up to the mast, and at their appearance the doubts of the most sceptical were dissipated; but whence they had obtained their liquor no one could tell. It

was observed however, at the time, that the tarry knaves all smelled of lavender, like so many dandies.

After their examination they were ordered into the "brig," a gaol-house between two guns on the main-deck, where prisoners are kept. Here they laid for some time, stretched out stark and stiff, with their arms folded over their breasts, like so many effigies of the Black Prince on his monument in Canterbury Cathedral.

Their first slumbers over, the marine sentry who stood guard over them had as much as he could do to keep off the crowd, who were all eagerness to find out how, in such a time of want, the prisoners had managed to drink themselves into oblivion. In due time they were liberated, and the secret simultaneously leaked out.

It seemed that an enterprising man of their number, who had suffered severely from the common deprivation, had all at once been struck by a brilliant idea. It had come to his knowledge that the purser's steward was supplied with a large quantity of *Eau-de-Cologne*, clandestinely brought out in the ship, for the purpose of selling it, on his own account, to the people of the coast; but the supply proving larger than the demand, and having no customers on board the frigate but Lieutenant Selvagee, he was now carrying home more than a third of his original stock. To make a short story of it, this functionary being called upon in secret, was readily prevailed upon to part with a dozen bottles,

with whose contents the intoxicated party had regaled themselves.

The news spread far and wide among the men, being only kept secret from the officers and underlings, and that night the long, crane-necked Cologne bottles jingled in out of-the-way corners and by-places, and, being emptied, were sent flying out of the ports. With brown sugar, taken from the mess-chests, and hot water begged from the galley-cooks, the men made all manner of punches, toddies, and cocktails, letting fall therein a small drop of tar, like a bit of brown toast, by way of imparting a flavour. Of course the thing was managed with the utmost secrecy; and as a whole dark night elapsed after their orgies, the revellers were, in a good measure, secure from detection; and those who indulged too freely had twelve long hours to get sober before daylight obtruded.

Next day, fore and aft, the whole frigate smelled like a lady's toilet; the very tar-buckets were fragrant; and from the mouth of many a grim, grizzled old quarter-gunner came the most fragrant of breaths. The amazed Lieutenants went about snuffing up the gale; and, for once, Selvagee had no further need to flourish his perfumed handkerchief. It was as if we were sailing by some odoriferous shore, in the vernal season of violets. Sabæan odours!

"For many a league,
Cheer'd with the grateful smell, old Ocean smiled."

But, alas ! all this perfume could not be wasted for nothing ; and the masters-at-arms and ship's corporals putting this and that together, very soon burrowed into the secret. The purser's steward was called to account, and no more lavender punches and Cologne toddies were drank on board the Neversink.

CHAPTER XV.

A SALT-JUNK CLUB IN A MAN-OF-WAR, WITH A NOTICE TO QUIT.

IT was about the period of the Cologne-water excitement that my self-conceit was not a little wounded, and my sense of delicacy altogether shocked, by a polite hint received from the cook of the mess to which I happened to belong. To understand the matter, it is needful to enter into preliminaries.

The common seamen in a large frigate are divided into some thirty or forty messes, put down on the purser's books as *Mess No. 1*, *Mess No. 2*, *Mess No. 3*, &c. The members of each mess club their rations of provisions, and breakfast, dine, and sup together in allotted intervals between the guns on the main-deck. In undeviating rotation, the members of each mess (excepting the petty-officers) take their turn in performing the functions of cook and steward. And for the time being, all the affairs of the club are subject to their inspection and control.

It is the cook's business, also, to have an eye to the general interests of his mess ; to see that, when the aggregated allowances of beef, bread, &c. are served out by one of the master's mates, the mess over which he presides receives its full share, without stint or

subtraction. Upon the berth-deck he has a chest, in which to keep his pots, pans, spoons, and small stores of sugar, molasses, tea, and flour.

But though entitled a cook, strictly speaking, the head of the mess is no cook at all; for the cooking for the crew is all done by a high and mighty functionary, officially called the "*ship's cook*," assisted by several deputies. In our frigate, this personage was a dignified coloured gentleman, whom the men dubbed "*Old Coffee*;" and his assistants, negroes also, went by the poetical appellations of "*Sunshine*," "*Rose-water*," and "*May-day*."

Now, the *ship's cooking* required very little science, though Old Coffee often assured us that he had graduated at the New York Astor House, under the immediate eye of the celebrated Coleman and Stetson. All he had to do was, in the first place, to keep bright and clean the three huge coppers, or caldrons, in which many hundred pounds of beef were daily boiled. To this end, Rose-water, Sunshine, and May-day every morning sprang into their respective apartments, stripped to the waist, and well provided with bits of soap-stone and sand. By exercising these in a very vigorous manner, they threw themselves into a violent perspiration, and put a fine polish upon the interior of the coppers.

Sunshine was the bard of the trio; and while all three would be busily employed clattering their soap-stones against the metal, he would exhilarate them

with some remarkable St. Domingo melodies; one of which was the following:—

“ Oh! I los’ my shoe in an old canoe,
Johnio! come Winum so!
Oh! I los’ my boot in a pilot-boat,
Johnio! come Winum so!
Den rub-a-dub de copper, oh!
Oh! copper rub-a-dub-a-oh!”

When I listened to these jolly Africans, thus making gleeful their toil by their cheering songs, I could not help murmuring against that immemorial rule of men-of-war, which forbids the sailors to sing out, as in merchant-vessels, when pulling ropes, or occupied at any other ship’s duty. Your only music, at such times, is the shrill pipe of the boatswain’s mate, which is almost worse than no music at all. And if the boatswain’s mate is not by, you must pull the ropes, like convicts, in profound silence; or else endeavour to impart unity to the exertions of all hands, by singing out mechanically, *one, two, three*, and then pulling all together.

Now, when Sunshine, Rose-water, and May-day have so polished the ship’s coppers, that a white kid glove might be drawn along the inside and show no stain, they leap out of their holes, and the water is poured in for the coffee. And the coffee being boiled, and decanted off in buckets’ full, the cooks of the messes march up with their salt beef for dinner, strung upon strings and tallied with labels; all of which are plunged

together into the self-same coppers, and there boiled. When, upon the beef being fished out with a huge pitch-fork, the water for the evening's tea is poured in ; which, consequently, possesses a flavour not unlike that of shank-soup.

From this it will be seen, that, so far as cooking is concerned, a "*cook of the mess*" has very little to do ; merely carrying his provisions to and from the grand democratic cookery. Still, in some things, his office involves many annoyances. Twice a week butter and cheese are served out—so much to each man—and the mess-cook has the sole charge of these delicacies. The great difficulty consists in so catering for the mess, touching these luxuries, as to satisfy all. Some guzzlers are for devouring the butter at a meal, and finishing off with the cheese the same day ; others contend for saving it up against *Banyan Day*, when there is nothing but beef and bread ; and others, again, are for taking a very small bit of butter and cheese, by way of dessert, to each and every meal through the week. All this gives rise to endless disputes, debates, and altercations.

Sometimes, with his mess-cloth—a square of painted canvass—set out on deck between the guns, garnished with pots, and pans, and *kids*, you see the mess-cook seated on a match-tub at its head, his trowser legs rolled up and arms bared, presiding over the convivial party.

“Now, men, you can’t have any butter to-day. I’m saving it up for to-morrow. You don’t know the value of butter, men. You, Jim, take your hoof off the cloth! Devil take me, if some of you chaps haven’t no more manners than so many swines! Quick, men, quick; bear a hand, and ‘*scoff*’ (eat) away.—I’ve got my to-morrow’s *duff* to make yet, and some of you fellows keep *scoffing* as if I had nothing to do but sit still here on this here tub here, and look on. There, there, men, you’ve all had enough; so sail away out of this, and let me clear up the wreck.”

In this strain would one of the periodical cooks of mess No. 15 talk to us. He was a tall, resolute fellow, who had once been a breakman on a railroad, and he kept us all pretty straight; from his fiat there was no appeal.

But it was not thus when the turn came to others among us. Then it was, *look out for squalls*. The business of dining became a bore, and digestion was seriously impaired by the unamiable discourse we had over our *salt horse*.

I sometimes thought that the junks of lean pork—which were boiled in their own bristles, and looked gaunt and grim, like pickled chins of half-famished, unwashed Cossacks—had something to do with creating the bristling bitterness at times prevailing in our mess. The men tore off the tough hide from their pork, as if they were Indians scalping Christians.

Some cursed the cook for a rogue, who kept from us our butter and cheese, in order to make away with it himself in an underhand manner ; selling it at a premium to other messes, and thus accumulating a princely fortune at our expense. Others anathematized him for his slovenliness, casting hypercritical glances into their pots and pans, and scraping them with their knives. Then he would be railed at for his miserable “ duffs,” and other short-coming preparations.

Marking all this from the beginning, I, White-Jacket, was sorely troubled with the idea, that, in the course of time, my own turn would come round to undergo the same objurgations. How to escape, I knew not. However, when the dreaded period arrived, I received the keys of office (the keys of the mess-chest) with a resigned temper, and offered up a devout ejaculation for fortitude under the trial. I resolved, please Heaven, to approve myself an unexceptionable caterer, and the most impartial of stewards.

The first day there was “ *duff* ” to make—a business which devolved upon the mess-cooks, though the boiling of it pertained to Old Coffee and his deputies. I made up my mind to lay myself out on that *duff* ; to centre all my energies upon it ; to put the very soul of art into it, and achieve an unrivalled *duff*—a *duff* that should put out of conceit all other *duffs*, and for ever make my administration memorable.

From the proper functionary the flour was obtained, and the raisins; the beef-fat, or "*slush*," from Old Coffee; and the requisite supply of water from the scuttle-butt. I then went among the various cooks, to compare their receipts for making "duffs;" and having well weighed them all, and gathered from each a choice item to make an original receipt of my own, with due deliberation and solemnity I proceeded to business. Placing the component parts in a tin pan, I kneaded them together for an hour, entirely reckless as to pulmonary considerations, touching the ruinous expenditure of breath; and having decanted the semi-liquid dough into a canvass-bag, secured the muzzle, tied on the talley, and delivered it to Rose-water, who dropped the precious bag into the coppers, along with a score or two of others.

Eight bells had struck. The boatswain and his mates had piped the hands to dinner; my mess-cloth was set out, and my messmates were assembled, knife in hand, all ready to precipitate themselves upon the devoted *duff*. Waiting at the grand cookery till my turn came, I received the bag of pudding, and gallanting it into the mess, proceeded to loosen the string.

It was an anxious, I may say, a fearful moment. My hands trembled; every eye was upon me; my reputation and credit were at stake. Slowly I undressed the *duff*, dandling it upon my knee, much as a nurse does a baby about bed-time. The excitement increased, as

I curled down the bag from the pudding ; it became intense, when at last I plumped it into the pan, held up to receive it by an eager hand. Bim ! it fell like a man shot down in a riot. Distraction ! It was harder than a sinner's heart ; yea, tough as the cock that crowed on the morn that Peter told a lie.

"Gentlemen of the mess, for heaven's sake ! permit me one word. I have done my duty by that duff—I have—"

But they beat down my excuses with a storm of criminations. One present proposed that the fatal pudding should be tied round my neck, like a mill-stone, and myself pushed overboard. No use, no use ; I had failed ; ever after, that duff lay heavy at my stomach and my heart.

After this, I grew desperate ; despised popularity ; returned scorn for scorn ; till at length my week expired, and in the duff-bag I transferred the keys of office to the next man on the roll.

Somehow, there had never been a very cordial feeling between this mess and me ; all along they had nourished a prejudice against my white jacket. They must have harboured the silly fancy that in it I gave myself airs, and wore it in order to look consequential ; perhaps, as a cloak to cover pilferings of tit-bits from the mess. But to out with the plain truth, they themselves were not a very irreproachable set. Considering the sequel I am coming to, this avowal may be deemed sheer

malice ; but for all that, I cannot avoid speaking my mind.

After my week of office, the mess gradually changed their behaviour to me ; they cut me to the heart ; they became cold and reserved ; seldom or never addressed me at meal-times without invidious allusions to my *duff*, and also to my jacket, and its dripping in wet weather upon the mess-cloth. However, I had no idea that any thing serious, on their part, was brewing ; but alas ! so it turned out.

We were assembled at supper one evening, when I noticed certain winks and silent hints tipped to the cook, who presided. He was a little, oily fellow, who had once kept an oyster-cellar ashore ; he bore me a grudge. Looking down on the mess-cloth, he observed that some fellows never knew when their room was better than their company. This being a maxim of indiscriminate application, of course I silently assented to it, as any other reasonable man would have done. But this remark was followed up by another, to the effect that not only did some fellows never know when their room was better than their company, but they persisted in staying when their company wasn't wanted ; and by so doing disturbed the serenity of society at large. But this, also, was a general observation that could not be gainsayed. A long and ominous pause ensued ; during which I perceived every eye upon me, and my white jacket ; while the cook went on to enlarge upon the

disagreeableness of a perpetually damp garment in the mess, especially when that garment was white. This was coming nearer home.

Yes, they were going to black-ball me; but I resolved to sit it out a little longer; never dreaming that my moralist would proceed to extremities while all hands were present. But bethinking him that by going this roundabout way he would never get at his object, he went off on another tack; apprising me, in substance, that he was instructed by the whole mess, then and there assembled, to give me warning to seek out another club, as they did not longer fancy the society either of myself or my jacket.

I was shocked. Such a want of tact and delicacy! Common propriety suggested that a point-blank intimation of that nature should be conveyed in a private interview; or, still better, by note. I immediately rose, tucked my jacket about me, bowed, and departed.

And now, to do myself justice, I must add that, the next day, I was received with open arms by a glorious set of fellows—mess No. 1!—numbering among the rest, my noble Captain Jack Chase.

This mess was principally composed of the headmost men of the gun-deck; and, out of a pardonable self-conceit, they called themselves the "*Forty-two-pounder Club*;" meaning that they were, one and all, fellows of large intellectual and corporeal calibre. Their mess-cloth was well located. On their starboard hand was

Mess No. 2, embracing sundry rare jokers and high livers, who waxed gay and epicurean over their salt fare, and were known as the "Society for the *Destruction of Beef and Pork*." On the larboard hand was *Mess No. 31*, made up entirely of fore-top-men, a dashing, blaze-away set of man-of-war's-men, who called themselves the "*Cape Horn Snorters and Neversink Invincibles*." Opposite, was one of the marine messes, mustering the aristocracy of the marine corps—the two corporals, the drummer and fifer, and some six or eight rather gentlemanly privates, native-born Americans, who had served in the Seminole campaigns of Florida; and they now enlivened their salt fare with stories of wild ambushes in the everglades; and one of them related a surprising tale of his hand-to-hand encounter with Osceola, the Indian chief, whom he fought one morning from daybreak till breakfast time. This slashing private also boasted that he could take a chip from between your teeth at twenty paces; he offered to bet any amount on it; and as he could get no one to hold the chip, his boast remained for ever good.

Besides many other attractions which the *Forty-two-pounder Club* furnished, it had this one special advantage, that, owing to there being so many *petty officers* in it, all the members of the mess were exempt from doing duty as cooks and stewards. A fellow called a *steady-cook*, attended to that business during the entire cruise. He was a long, lank, pallid varlet, going by

the name of Shanks. In very warm weather this Shanks would sit at the foot of the mess-cloth, fanning himself with the front flap of his frock or shirt, which he inelegantly wore over his trowsers. Jack Chase, the President of the Club, frequently remonstrated against this breach of good manners ; but the *steady-cook* had somehow contracted the habit, and it proved incurable. For a time, Jack Chase, out of a polite nervousness touching myself, as a newly-elected member of the club, would frequently endeavour to excuse to me the vulgarity of Shanks. One day he wound up his remarks by the philosophic reflection—"But White-Jacket, my dear fellow, what can you expect of him ? Our real misfortune is, that our noble club should be obliged to dine with its cook."

There were several of these *steady-cooks* on board : men of no mark or consideration whatever in the ship ; lost to all noble promptings ; sighing for no worlds to conquer, and perfectly contented with mixing their *duffs*, and spreading their mess-cloths, and mustering their pots and pans together three times every day for a three years' cruise. They were very seldom to be seen on the spar-deck, but kept below out of sight.

CHAPTER XVI.

GENERAL TRAINING IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

To a quiet, contemplative character, averse to uproar, undue exercise of his bodily members, and all kind of useless confusion, nothing can be more distressing than a proceeding in all men-of-war called "*general quarters*." And well may it be so called, since it amounts to a general drawing and quartering of all the parties concerned.

As the specific object for which a man-of-war is built and put into commission is to fight and fire off cannon, it is, of course, deemed indispensable that the crew should be duly instructed in the art and mystery involved. Hence these "*general quarters*," which is a mustering of all hands to their stations at the guns on the several decks, and a sort of sham-fight with an imaginary foe.

The summons is given by the ship's drummer, who strikes a peculiar beat—short, broken, rolling, shuffling—like the sound made by the march into battle of iron-heeled grenadiers. It is a regular tune, with a fine song

composed to it; the words of the chorus, being most artistically arranged, may give some idea of the air:—

“Hearts of oak are our ships, jolly tars are our men,
We always are ready, steady, boys, steady,
To fight and to conquer, again and again.”

In warm weather this pastime at the guns is exceedingly unpleasant, to say the least, and throws a quiet man into a violent passion and perspiration. For one, I ever abominated it.

I have a heart like Julius Cæsar, and upon occasion would fight like Caius Marcius Coriolanus. If my beloved and for ever glorious country should be ever in jeopardy from invaders, let Congress put me on a war-horse, in the vanguard, and *then* see how I will acquit myself. But to toil and sweat in a fictitious encounter; to squander the precious breath of my precious body in a ridiculous fight of shams and pretensions; to hurry about the decks, pretending to carry the killed and wounded below; to be told that I must consider the ship blowing up, in order to exercise myself in presence of mind, and prepare for a real explosion; all this I despise, as beneath a true tar and man of valour.

These were my sentiments at the time, and these remain my sentiments still; but as, while on board the frigate, my liberty of thought did not extend to liberty of expression, I was obliged to keep these sentiments to myself: though, indeed, I had some thoughts of addressing a letter, marked *private and confidential*, to his Honour the Commodore, on the subject.

My station at the batteries was at one of the thirty-two-pound carronades, on the starboard side of the quarter-deck.*

I did not fancy this station at all ; for it is well known on shipboard that, in time of action, the quarter-deck is one of the most dangerous posts of a man-of-war. The reason is, that the officers of the highest rank are there stationed ; and the enemy have an ungentlemanly way of target-shooting at their buttons. If we should chance to engage a ship, then, who could tell but some bungling small-arm marksman in the enemy's tops might put a bullet through *me* instead of the Commodore ? If they hit *him*, no doubt he would not feel it much, for he was used to that sort of thing, and, indeed, had a bullet in him already ; whereas, *I* was altogether

* For the benefit of a Quaker reader here and there, a word or two in explanation of a carronade may not be amiss. The carronade is a gun comparatively short and light for its calibre. A carronade throwing a thirty-two-pound shot weighs considerably less than a long-gun only throwing a twenty-four-pound shot. It further differs from a long-gun, in working with a joint and bolt underneath, instead of the short arms or *trunnions* at the sides. Its *carriage*, likewise, is quite different from that of a long-gun, having a sort of sliding apparatus, something like an extension dining-table ; the goose on it, however, is a tough one, and villainously stuffed with most indigestible dumplings. Point-blank, the range of a carronade does not exceed one hundred and fifty yards, much less than the range of a long-gun. When of large calibre, however, it throws within that limit, Paixhan shot, all manner of shells and combustibles, with great effect, being a very destructive engine at close quarters. This piece is now very generally found mounted in the batteries of the English and American navies. The quarter-deck armaments of most modern frigates wholly consist of carronades. The name is derived from the village of Carron, in Scotland, at whose celebrated foundaries this iron Attila was first cast.

unaccustomed to having blue pills playing round my head in such an indiscriminate way. Besides, ours was a flag-ship; and every one knows what a peculiarly dangerous predicament the quarter-deck of Nelson's flag-ship was in at the battle of Trafalgar; how the lofty tops of the enemy were full of soldiers, peppering away at the English admiral and his officers. Many a poor sailor, at the guns of that quarter-deck, must have received a bullet intended for some wearer of an epaulet.

By candidly confessing my feelings on this subject, I do by no means invalidate my claims to being held a man of prodigious valour. I merely state my invincible repugnance to being shot for somebody else. If I am shot, be it with the express understanding in the shooter that I am the identical person intended so to be served. That Thracian who, with his compliments, sent an arrow into the king of Macedon, superscribed, "For Philip's right eye," set a fine example to all warriors. The hurried, hasty, indiscriminate, reckless, abandoned manner in which both sailors and soldiers nowadays fight is really painful to any serious-minded, methodical old gentleman, especially if he chance to have systematized his mind as an accountant. There is little or no skill and bravery about it. Two parties, armed with lead and old iron, envelop themselves in a cloud of smoke, and pitch their lead and old iron about in all directions. If you happen to be in the way, you are hit; possibly killed; if not, you escape. In sea actions, if

by good or bad luck, as the case may be, a round shot fired at random through the smoke happens to send overboard your foremast, another to unship your rudder, there you lie crippled, pretty much at the mercy of your foe; who, accordingly, pronounces himself victor, though that honour properly belongs to the law of gravitation operating on the enemy's balls in the smoke. Instead of tossing this old lead and iron into the air, therefore, it would be much better amicably to toss up a copper and let heads win.

The carronade at which I was stationed was known as "Gun No. 5," on the First Lieutenant's quarter-bill. Among our gun's crew, however, it was known as *Black Bet*. This name was bestowed by the captain of the gun—a fine negro—in honour of his sweetheart, a coloured lady of Philadelphia. Of *Black Bet* I was rammer and sponger; and ram and sponge I did, like a good fellow. I have no doubt that, had I and my gun been at the battle of the Nile, we would mutually have immortalized ourselves; the ramming-pole would have been hung up in Westminster Abbey; and I, ennobled by the king, besides receiving the illustrious honour of an autograph letter from his Majesty through the perfumed right hand of his private secretary.

But it was terrible work to help run in and out of the port-hole that amazing mass of metal, especially as the thing must be done in a trice. Then, at the summons of a horrid, rasping rattle swayed by the Captain in

person, we were made to rush from our guns, seize pikes and pistols, and repel an imaginary army of boarders, who, by a fiction of the officers, were supposed to be assailing all sides of the ship at once. After cutting and slashing at them awhile, we jumped back to our guns, and again went to jerking our elbows.

Meantime, a loud cry is heard of "Fire! fire! fire!" in the fore-top; and a regular engine, worked by a set of Bowery-boy tars, is forthwith set to playing streams of water aloft. And now it is "Fire! fire! fire!" on the main-deck; and the entire ship is in as great a commotion as if a whole city ward were in a blaze.

Are our officers of the navy utterly unacquainted with the laws of good health? Do they not know that this violent exercise, taking place just after a hearty dinner, as it generally does, is eminently calculated to breed the dyspepsia? There was no satisfaction in dining; the flavour of every mouthful was destroyed by the thought that the next moment the cannonading drum might be beating to quarters.

Such a sea-martinet was our Captain, that sometimes we were roused from our hammocks at night; when a scene would ensue that it is not in the power of pen and ink to describe. Five hundred men spring to their feet, dress themselves, take up their bedding, and run to the nettings and stow it; then hie to their stations—each man jostling his neighbour—some alow, some

aloft ; some this way, some that ; and in less than five minutes the frigate is ready for action, and still as the grave ; almost every man precisely where he would be were an enemy actually about to be engaged. The Gunner, like a Cornwall miner in a cave, is burrowing down in the magazine under the Ward-room, which is lighted by battle-lanterns, placed behind glazed glass bull's-eyes inserted in the bulk-head. The *Powder-monkeys*, or boys, who fetch and carry cartridges, are scampering to and fro among the guns : and the *first and second loaders* stand ready to receive their supplies.

These *Powder-monkeys*, as they are called, enact a curious part in time of action. The entrance to the magazine on the berth-deck, where they procure their food for the guns, is guarded by a woollen screen ; and a gunner's mate, standing behind it, thrusts out the cartridges through a small arm-hole in this screen. The enemy's shot (perhaps red-hot) are flying in all directions ; and to protect their cartridges, the powder-monkeys hurriedly wrap them up in their jackets ; and with all haste scramble up the ladders to their respective guns, like eating-house waiters hurrying along with hot cakes for breakfast.

At *general quarters* the shot-boxes are uncovered ; showing the grape-shot—aptly so called, for they precisely resemble bunches of the fruit ; though, to receive a bunch of iron grapes in the abdomen would be but a sorry dessert ; and also showing the canister-shot—

old iron of various sorts, packed in a tin case, like a tea-caddy.

Imagine some midnight craft sailing down on her enemy thus; twenty-four pounders levelled, matches lighted, and each captain of his gun at his post!

But if verily going into action, then would the *Neversink* have made still further preparations; for however alike in some things, there is always a vast difference—if you sound them—between a reality and a sham. Not to speak of the pale sternness of the men at their guns at such a juncture, and the choked thoughts at their hearts, the ship itself would here and there present a far different appearance: something like that of an extensive mansion preparing for a grand entertainment, when folding-doors are withdrawn, chambers converted into drawing-rooms, and every inch of available space thrown into one continuous whole. For previous to an action, every bulk-head of a man-of-war is knocked down; great guns are run out of the Commodore's parlour windows; nothing separates the ward-room officers' quarters from those of the men, but an ensign used for a curtain. The sailors' mess-chests are tumbled down into the hold; and the hospital cots—of which all men-of-war carry a large supply—are dragged forth from the sail-room, and piled near at hand to receive the wounded; amputation-tables are ranged in the *cock-pit* or in the *tiers*, whereon to carve the bodies of the maimed. The yards are slung in chains; fire-

screens distributed here and there ; hillocks of cannon-balls piled between the guns ; shot-plugs suspended within easy reach from the beams ; and solid masses of wads, big as Dutch cheeses, braced to the cheeks of the gun-carriages.

No small difference, also, would be visible in the wardrobe of both officers and men. The officers generally fight as dandies dance, namely, in silk stockings ; inasmuch as, in case of being wounded in the leg, the silk-hose can be more easily drawn off by the Surgeon ; cotton sticks, and works into the wound. An economical captain, while taking care to case his legs in silk, might yet see fit to save his best suit, and fight in his old clothes. For, besides that an old garment might much better be cut to pieces than a new one, it must be a mighty disagreeable thing to die in a stiff, tight-breasted coat, not yet worked easy under the armpits. At such times, a man should feel free, unencumbered, and perfectly at his ease in point of straps and suspenders. No ill-will concerning his tailor should intrude upon his thoughts of eternity. Seneca understood this, when he chose to die naked in a bath. And man-of-war's-men understand it, also ; for most of them, in battle, strip to the waistbands ; wearing nothing but a pair of duck-trowsers, and a handkerchief round their head.

A captain combining a heedful patriotism with economy, would probably " bend " his old topsails

before going into battle, instead of exposing his best canvass to be riddled to pieces ; for it is generally the case that the enemy's shot flies high. Unless allowance is made for it in pointing the tube, at long-gun distance, the slightest roll of the ship, at the time of firing, would send a shot, meant for the hull, high over the top-gallant yards.

But besides these differences between a sham-fight at *general quarters* and a real cannonading, the aspect of the ship, at the beating of the retreat, would, in the latter case, be very dissimilar to the neatness and uniformity in the former.

Then our bulwarks might look like the walls of the houses in West Broadway in New York, after being broken into and burned out by the Negro Mob. Our stout masts and yards might be lying about decks, like tree-boughs after a tornado in a piece of woodland ; our dangling ropes, cut and sundered in all directions, would be bleeding tar at every yarn ; and strewn with jagged splinters from our wounded planks, the gun-deck might resemble a carpenter's shop. *Then*, when all was over, and all hands would be piped to take down the hammocks from the exposed nettings (where they play the part of the cotton bales at New Orleans), we might find bits of broken shot, iron bolts, and bullets in our blankets. And, while smeared with blood like butchers, the surgeon and his mates would be amputating arms and legs on the berth-deck, an

underling of the carpenter's gang would be new-legging and arming the broken chairs and tables in the Commodore's cabin, while the rest of his *squad* would be *splicing* and *fishing* the shattered masts and yards. The scupper-holes having discharged the last rivulet of blood, the decks would be washed down; and the galley-cooks would be going fore and aft, sprinkling them with hot vinegar, to take out the shambles' smell from the planks; which, unless some such means are employed, often create a highly offensive effluvia for weeks after a fight.

Then, upon mustering the men, and calling the quarter-bills by the light of a battle-lantern, many a wounded seaman, with his arm in a sling, would answer for some poor shipmate who could never more make answer for himself:—

“Tom Brown?”

“Killed, sir.”

“Jack Jewel?”

“Killed, sir.”

“Joe Hardy?”

“Killed, sir.”

And opposite all these poor fellows' names, down would go on the quarter-bills the bloody marks of red ink—a murderer's fluid, fitly used on these occasions.

CHAPTER XVII.

AWAY ! SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH CUTTERS, AWAY !

It was the morning succeeding one of these *general quarters* that we picked up a life-buoy, descried floating by.

It was a circular mass of cork, about eight inches thick and four feet in diameter, covered with tarred canvass. All round its circumference there trailed a number of knotted ropes'-ends, terminating in fanciful Turks' heads. These were the life-lines, for the drowning to clutch. Inserted into the middle of the cork was an upright, carved pole, somewhat shorter than a pike-staff. The whole buoy was embossed with barnacles, and its sides festooned with sea-weed. Dolphins were sporting and flashing around it, and one white bird was hovering over the top of the pole. Long ago, this thing must have been thrown overboard to save some poor wretch, who must have been drowned ; while even the life-buoy itself had drifted away out of sight.

The forecastle-men fished it up from the bows, and the seamen thronged round it.

"Bad luck ! bad luck !" cried the Captain of the Head ; "we'll number one less before long."

The ship's cooper strolled by: he, to whose department it belongs to see that the ship's life-buoys are kept in good order.

In men-of-war, night and day, week in and week out, two life-buoys are kept depending from the stern; and two men, with hatchets in their hands, pace up and down, ready at the first cry to cut the cord and drop the buoys overboard. Every two hours they are regularly relieved, like sentinels on guard. No similar precautions are adopted in the merchant or whaling service.

Thus deeply solicitous to preserve human life are the regulations of men-of-war; and seldom has there been a better illustration of this solicitude than at the battle of Trafalgar, when, after "several thousand" French seamen had been destroyed, according to Lord Collingwood, and, by the official returns, sixteen hundred and ninety Englishmen were killed or wounded, the captains of the surviving ships ordered the life-buoy sentries from their death-dealing guns to their vigilant posts, as officers of the Humane Society.

"There, Bungs!" cried Scrimmage, a sheet-anchor-man,* "there's a good pattern for you; make us a brace of life-buoys like that; something that will save a man, and not fill and sink under him, as those leaky quarter-casks of yours will the first time there's occa-

* In addition to the *Bower-anchors* carried on her bows, a frigate carries large anchors in her fore-chains, called *Sheet-anchors*. Hence, the old seamen stationed in that part of a man-of-war are called *Sheet-anchor-men*.

sion to drop 'em. I came near pitching off the bowsprit the other day; and, when I scrambled inboard again, I went aft to get a squint at 'em. Why, Bungs, they are all open between the staves. Shame on you! Suppose you yourself should fall overboard, and find yourself going down with buoys under you of your own making—what then?"

"I never go aloft, and don't intend to fall overboard," replied Bungs.

"Don't believe it!" cried the sheet-anchor-man; "you lopers that live about the decks here are nearer the bottom of the sea than the light hand that looses the main-royal. Mind your eye, Bungs—mind your eye!"

"I will," retorted Bungs; "and you mind yours!"

Next day, just at dawn, I was startled from my hammock by the cry of, "*All hands about ship and shorten sail!*" Springing up the ladders, I found that an unknown man had fallen overboard from the chains; and darting a glance toward the poop, perceived, from their gestures, that the life-sentries there had cut away the buoys.

It was blowing a fresh breeze; the frigate was going fast through the water. But the one thousand arms of five hundred men soon tossed her about on the other tack, and checked her further headway.

"Do you see him?" shouted the officer of the watch through his trumpet, hailing the main-mast-head. "Man or *buoy*, do you see either?"

"See nothing, sir," was the reply.

"Clear away the cutters!" was the next order. "Bugler! call away the second, third, and fourth cutters' crews. Hands by the tackles!"

In less than three minutes the three boats were down. More hands were wanted in one of them, and, among others, I jumped in to make up the deficiency.

"Now, men, give way! and each man look out along his oar, and look sharp!" cried the officer of our boat. For a time, in perfect silence, we slid up and down the great seething swells of the sea, but saw nothing.

"There, it's no use," cried the officer; "he's gone, whoever he is. Pull away, men—pull away! they'll be recalling us soon."

"Let him drown!" cried the strokesman; "he's spoiled my watch below for me."

"Who the devil is he?" cried another.

"He's one who'll never have a coffin!" replied a third.

"No, no! they'll never sing out, '*All hands bury the dead!*' for him, my hearties!" cried a fourth.

"Silence," said the officer, "and look along your oars." But the sixteen oarsmen still continued their talk; and, after pulling about for two or three hours, we spied the recall-signal at the frigate's fore-t'-gallant-mast-head, and returned on board, having seen no sign even of the life-buoys.

The boats were hoisted up, the yards braced forward, and away we bowled—one man less.

“ Muster all hands ! ” was now the order ; when, upon calling the roll, the cooper was the only man missing.

“ I told you so, men,” cried the Captain of the Head ;
“ I said we would lose a man before long.”

“ Bungs, is it ? ” cried Scrimmage, the sheet-anchor-man ; “ I told him his buoys wouldn’t save a drowning man ; and now he has proved it ! ”

CHAPTER XVIII.

A MAN-OF-WAR FULL AS A NUT.

IT was necessary to supply the lost cooper's place ; accordingly, word was passed for all who belonged to that calling to muster at the main-mast, in order that one of them might be selected. Thirteen men obeyed the summons—a circumstance illustrative of the fact that many good handicraftsmen are lost to their trades and the world by serving in men-of-war. Indeed, from a frigate's crew might be culled out men of all callings and vocations, from a backslidden parson to a broken-down comedian. The Navy is the asylum for the perverse, the home of the unfortunate. Here the sons of adversity meet the children of calamity, and here the children of calamity meet the offspring of sin. Bankrupt brokers, boot-blacks, blacklegs, and blacksmiths here assemble together ; and cast-away tinkers, watch-makers, quill-drivers, cobblers, doctors, farmers, and lawyers compare past experiences and talk of old times. Wrecked on a desert shore, a man-of-war's crew could quickly found an Alexandria by themselves, and fill it with all the things which go to make up a capital.

Frequently, at one and the same time, you see every trade in operation on the gun-deck—coopering,

carpentering, tailoring, tinkering, blacksmithing, rope-making, preaching, gambling, and fortune-telling.

In truth, a man-of-war is a city afloat, with long avenues set out with guns instead of trees, and numerous shady lanes, courts, and by-ways. The quarter-deck is a grand square, park, or parade ground, with a great Pittsfield elm, in the shape of the main-mast, at one end, and fronted at the other by the palace of the Commodore's cabin.

Or, rather, a man-of-war is a lofty, walled, and garrisoned town, like Quebec, where the thoroughfares are mostly ramparts, and peaceable citizens meet armed sentries at every corner.

Or it is like the lodging-houses in Paris, turned upside down ; the first floor, or deck, being rented by a lord ; the second, by a select club of gentlemen ; the third, by crowds of artisans ; and the fourth, by a whole rabble of common people.

For even thus is it in a frigate, where the commander has a whole cabin to himself on the spar-deck, the lieutenants their ward-room underneath, and the mass of sailors swing their hammocks under all.

And with its long rows of port-hole casements, each revealing the muzzle of a cannon, a man-of-war resembles a three-story house in a suspicious part of the town, with a basement of indefinite depth, and ugly-looking fellows gazing out at the windows.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE JACKET ALOFT.

AGAIN must I call attention to my white jacket, which about this time came near being the death of me.

I am of a meditative humour, and at sea used often to mount aloft at night, and, seating myself on one of the upper yards, tuck my jacket about me and give loose to reflection. In some ships in which I have done this, the sailors used to fancy that I must be studying astronomy—which, indeed, to some extent, was the case—and that my object in mounting aloft was to get a nearer view of the stars, supposing me, of course, to be short-sighted. A very silly conceit of theirs, some may say, but not so silly after all; for surely the advantage of getting nearer an object by two hundred feet is not to be underrated. Then, to study the stars upon the wide, boundless sea, is divine as it was to the Chaldean Magi, who observed their revolutions from the plains.

And it is a very fine feeling, and one that fuses us into the universe of things, and makes us a part of the All, to think that, wherever we ocean-wanderers rove, we have still the same glorious old stars to keep us company; that they still shine onward and on, for ever

beautiful and bright, and luring us, by every ray, to die and be glorified with them.

Ay, ay! we sailors sail not in vain. We expatriate ourselves to nationalize with the universe; and in all our voyages round the world, we are still accompanied by those old circumnavigators, the stars, who are ship-mates and fellow-sailors of ours—sailing in heaven's blue, as we on the azure main. Let genteel generations scoff at our hardened hands, and finger-nails tipped with tar—did they ever clasp truer palms than ours? Let them feel of our sturdy hearts, beating like sledge-hammers in those hot smithies, our bosoms; with their amber-headed canes, let them feel of our generous pulses, and swear that they go off like thirty-two-pounders.

Oh, give me again the rover's life—the joy, the thrill, the whirl! Let me feel thee again, old sea! let me leap into thy saddle once more. I am sick of these terra firma toils and cares; sick of the dust and reek of towns. Let me hear the clatter of hailstones on ice-bergs, and not the dull tramp of these plodders, plodding their dull way from their cradles to their graves. Let me snuff thee up, sea-breeze! and whinny in thy spray. Forbid it, sea-gods! intercede for me with Neptune, O sweet Amphitrite, that no dull clod may fall on my coffin! Be mine the tomb that swallowed up Pharaoh and all his hosts; let me lie down with Drake, where he sleeps in the sea.

But when White-Jacket speaks of the rover's life, he means not life in a man-of-war, which, with its martial formalities and thousand vices, stabs to the heart the soul of all free-and-easy honourable rovers.

I have said that I was wont to mount up aloft and muse; and thus was it with me the night following the loss of the cooper. Ere my watch in the top had expired, high up on the main-royal-yard I reclined, the white jacket folded around me like Sir John Moore in his frosted cloak.

Eight bells had struck, and my watchmates had hied to their hammocks, and the other watch had gone to their stations, and the *top* below me was full of strangers, and still almost one hundred feet above even *them* I lay entranced; now dozing, now dreaming; now thinking of things past, and anon of the life to come. Well-timed was the latter thought, for the life to come was much nearer overtaking me than I then could imagine. Perhaps I was half conscious at last of a tremulous voice hailing the main-royal-yard from the *top*. But it so, the consciousness glided away from me, and left me in Lethe. But when, like lightning, the yard dropped under me, and instinctively I clung with both hands to the "*tie*," then I came to myself with a rush, and felt something like a choking hand at my throat. For an instant I thought the Gulf Stream in my head was whirling me away to eternity; but the next moment I found myself standing; the yard had descended to

the *cap*; and shaking myself in my jacket, I felt that I was unharmed and alive.

Who had done this? who had made this attempt on my life? thought I, as I ran down the rigging.

"Here it comes!—Lord! Lord! here it comes! See, see! it is white as a hammock."

"Who's coming?" I shouted, springing down into the top; "who's white as a hammock?"

"Bless my soul, Bill, it's only White-Jacket—that infernal White-Jacket again!"

It seems they had spied a moving white spot there aloft, and, sailor-like, had taken me for the ghost of the cooper; and after hailing me, and bidding me descend, to test my corporeality, and getting no answer, they had lowered the halyards in affright.

In a rage I tore off the jacket, and threw it on the deck.

"Jacket," cried I, "you must change your complexion! you must hie to the dyer's and be dyed, that I may live. I have but one poor life, White-Jacket, and that life I cannot spare. I cannot consent to die for *you*, but be dyed you must for me. You can dye many times without injury; but I cannot die without irreparable loss, and running the eternal risk."

So in the morning, jacket in hand, I repaired to the First Lieutenant, and related the narrow escape I had had during the night. I enlarged upon the general perils I ran in being taken for a ghost, and earnestly

besought him to relax his commands for once, and give me an order on Brush, the captain of the paint-room, for some black paint, that my jacket might be painted of that colour.

“ Just look at it, Sir,” I added, holding it up; “ did you ever see anything whiter? Consider how it shines of a night, like a bit of the Milky Way. A little paint, Sir :—you cannot refuse.”

“ The ship has no paint to spare,” he said; “ you must get along without it.”

“ Sir, every rain gives me a soaking ;—Cape Horn is at hand—six brushes-full would make it water-proof; and no longer would I be in peril of my life !”

“ Can’t help it, Sir; depart !”

I fear it will not be well with me in the end; for if my own sins are to be forgiven only as I forgive that hard-hearted and unimpressible First Lieutenant, then pardon there is none for me.

What! when but one dab of paint would make a man of a ghost, and a Mackintosh of a herring-net—to refuse it!

I am full. I can say no more.

CHAPTER XX

HOW THEY SLEEP IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

No more of my luckless jacket for a while ; let me speak of my hammock, and the tribulations I endured therefrom.

Give me plenty of room to swing it in ; let me swing it between two date-trees on an Arabian plain ; or extend it diagonally from Moorish pillar to pillar, in the open marble Court of the Lions in Granada's Alhambra : let me swing it on a high bluff of the Mississippi—one swing in the pure ether for every swing over the green grass ; or let me oscillate in it beneath the cool dome of St. Peter's ; or drop me in it, as in a balloon, from the zenith, with the whole firmament to rock and expatiate in ; and I would not exchange my coarse canvass hammock for the grand state-bed, like a stately coach-and-four, in which they tuck in a king when he passes a night at Blenheim Castle.

When you have the requisite room, you always have "spreaders" in your hammock ; that is, two horizontal sticks, one at each end, which serve to keep the sides apart, and create a wide vacancy between, wherein you can turn over and over—lay on this side or that ; on your back, if you please ; stretch out your legs ; in short,

take your ease in your hammock; for of all inns, your bed is the best.

But when, with five hundred other hammocks, yours is crowded and jammed in on all sides, on a frigate's berth-deck; the third from above;—when “*spreaders*” are prohibited by an express edict from the Captain's cabin; and every man about you is jealously watchful of the rights and privileges of his own proper hammock, as settled by law and usage; *then* your hammock is your Bastile and canvass jug; into which, or out of which, it is very hard to get; and where sleep is but a mockery and a name.

Eighteen inches a man is all they allow you; eighteen inches in width; in *that* you must swing. Dreadful! they give you more swing than that at the gallows.

During warm nights in the Tropics, your hammock is as a stew-pan; where you stew and stew, till you can almost hear yourself hiss. Vain are all stratagems to widen your accommodations. Let them catch you insinuating your boots or other articles in the head of your hammock, by way of a “*spreader*.” Near and far, the whole rank and file of the row to which you belong feel the encroachment in an instant, and are clamorous till the guilty one is found out, and his pallet brought back to its bearings.

In platoons and squadrons, they all lie on a level; their hammock *clews* crossing and recrossing in all directions, so as to present one vast field-bed, midway

between the ceiling and the floor ; which are about five feet asunder.

One extremely warm night, during a calm, when it was so hot that only a skeleton could keep cool (from the free current of air through its bones), after being drenched in my own perspiration, I managed to wedge myself out of my hammock ; and with what little strength I had left, lowered myself gently to the deck. Let me see now, thought I, whether my ingenuity cannot devise some method whereby I can have room to breathe and sleep at the same time. I have it. I will lower my hammock underneath all these others ; and then—upon that separate and independent level, at least—I shall have the whole berth-deck to myself. Accordingly, I lowered away my pallet to the desired point—about three inches from the floor—and crawled into it again.

But, alas ! this arrangement made such a sweeping semicircle of my hammock, that, while my head and feet were at par, the small of my back was settling down indefinitely ; I felt as if some gigantic archer had hold of me for a bow.

But there was another plan left. I triced up my hammock with all my strength, so as to bring it wholly *above* the tiers of pallets around me. This done, by a last effort I hoisted myself into it ; but alas ! it was much worse than before. My luckless hammock was stiff and straight as a board ; and there I was—laid out

in it, with my nose against the ceiling, like a dead man's against the lid of his coffin.

So at last I was fain to return to my old level, and moralize upon the folly, in all arbitrary governments, of striving to get either *below* or *above* those whom legislation has placed upon an equality with yourself.

Speaking of hammocks recalls a circumstance that happened one night in the Neversink. It was three or four times repeated, with various but not fatal results.

The watch below was fast asleep on the berth-deck, where perfect silence was reigning, when a sudden shock and a groan roused up all hands; and the hem of a pair of white trowsers vanished up one of the ladders at the fore-hatchway.

We ran toward the groan, and found a man lying on the deck; one end of his hammock having given way, pitching his head close to three twenty-four-pound cannon-shot, which must have been purposely placed in that position. When it was discovered that this man had long been suspected of being an *informer* among the crew, little surprise and less pleasure were evinced at his narrow escape.

CHAPTER XXI.

ONE REASON WHY MAN-OF-WAR'S-MEN ARE, GENERALLY, SHORT-LIVED.

I CANNOT quit this matter of the hammocks without making mention of a grievance among the sailors that ought to be redressed.

In a man-of-war at sea, the sailors have *watch and watch*; that is, through every twenty-four hours they are on and off duty every four hours. Now, the hammocks are piped down from the nettings (the open space for stowing them, running round the top of the bulwarks) a little after sunset, and piped up again when the forenoon watch is called, at eight o'clock in the morning; so that during the daytime they are inaccessible as pallets. This would be all well enough, did the sailors have a complete night's rest; but every other night at sea, one watch have only four hours in their hammocks. Indeed, deducting the time allowed for the other watch to turn out, for yourself to arrange your hammock, get into it, and fairly get asleep, it may be said that, every other night, you have but three hours' sleep in your hammock. Having then been on deck for twice four hours, at eight o'clock in the morning your *watch-below* comes round, and you are not liable to duty until noon. Under like circumstances,

a merchant seaman goes to his *bunk*, and has the benefit of a good long sleep. But in a man-of-war you can do no such thing; your hammock is very neatly stowed in the nettings, and there it must remain till nightfall.

But perhaps there is a corner for you somewhere along the batteries on the gun-deck, where you may enjoy a snug nap. But as no one is allowed to recline on the larboard side of the gun-deck (which is reserved as a corridor for the officers when they go forward to their smoking-room at the *bridle-port*), the starboard side only is left to the seamen. But most of this side, also, is occupied by the carpenters, sail-makers, barbers, and coopers. In short, so few are the corners where you can snatch a nap during daytime in a frigate, that not one in ten of the watch, who have been on deck eight hours, can get a wink of sleep till the following night. Repeatedly, after by good fortune securing a corner, I have been roused from it by some functionary commissioned to keep it clear.

Off Cape Horn, what before had been very uncomfortable became a serious hardship. Drenched through and through by the spray of the sea at night, I have sometimes slept standing on the spar-deck—and shuddered as I slept—for the want of sufficient sleep in my hammock.

During three days of the stormiest weather, we were given the privilege of the *berth-deck* (at other times strictly interdicted), where we were permitted to spread

our jackets, and take a nap in the morning after the eight hours' night exposure. But this privilege was but a beggarly one, indeed. Not to speak of our jackets—used for blankets—being soaking wet, the spray, coming down the hatchways, kept the planks of the berth-deck itself constantly wet; whereas, had we been permitted our hammocks, we might have swung dry over all this deluge. But we endeavoured to make ourselves as warm and comfortable as possible, chiefly by close stowing, so as to generate a little steam, in the absence of any fire-side warmth. You have seen, perhaps, the way in which they box up subjects intended to illustrate the winter lectures of a professor of surgery. Just so we laid; heel and point, face to back, dovetailed into each other at every ham and knee. The wet of our jackets, thus densely packed, would soon begin to distil. But it was like pouring hot water on you to keep you from freezing. It was like being “packed” between the soaked sheets in a Water-cure Establishment.

Such a posture could not be preserved for any considerable period without shifting side for side. Three or four times during the four hours I would be startled from a wet doze by the hoarse cry of a fellow who did the duty of a corporal at the after-end of my file, “*Sleepers ahoy ! stand by to slew round !*” and, with a double shuffle, we all rolled in concert, and found ourselves facing the taffrail instead of the bowsprit. But,

however you turned, your nose was sure to stick to one or other of the steaming backs on your two flanks. There was some little relief in the change of odour consequent upon this.

But what is the reason that, after battling out eight stormy hours on deck at night, man-of-war's-men are not allowed the poor boon of a dry four hours' nap during the day following? What is the reason? The Commodore, Captain, and First Lieutenant, Chaplain, Purser, and scores of others, have *all night in*, just as if they were staying at an hotel on shore. And the junior Lieutenants not only have their cots to go to at any time; but as only one of them is required to head the watch, and there are so many of them among whom to divide that duty, they are only on deck four hours to twelve hours below. In some cases the proportion is still greater. Whereas, with "the people," it is four hours in and four hours off continually.

What is the reason, then, that the common seamen should fare so hard in this matter? It would seem but a simple thing to let them get down their hammocks during the day for a nap. But no; such a proceeding would mar the uniformity of daily events in a man-of-war. It seems indispensable to the picturesque effect of the spar-deck, that the hammocks should invariably remain stowed in the nettings between sunrise and sundown. But the chief reason is this—a reason which has sanctioned many an abuse in this world—

precedents are against it: such a thing as sailors sleeping in their hammocks in the daytime, after being eight hours exposed to a night-storm, is not a regular thing in the Navy. Though, to the immortal honour of some captains be it said, the fact is upon navy record that, off Cape Horn, they *have* vouchsafed the morning hammocks to their crew. Heaven bless such tender-hearted officers; and may they and their descendants—ashore or afloat—have sweet and pleasant slumbers while they live, and an undreaming siesta when they die.

It is concerning such things as the subject of this chapter that special enactments of Congress are demanded. Health and comfort—so far as duly attainable under the circumstances—should be legally guaranteed to the man-of-war's-man; and not left to the discretion or caprice of his commander.

CHAPTER XXII.

WASH-DAY, AND HOUSE-CLEANING IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

BESIDES the other tribulations connected with your hammock, you must keep it snow-white and clean. Who has not observed the long rows of spotless hammocks exposed in a frigate's nettings, where, through the day, their outsides at least are kept airing?

Hence it comes that there are regular mornings appointed for the scrubbing of hammocks; and such mornings are called *scrub-hammock-mornings*, and desperate is the scrubbing that ensues.

Before daylight the operation begins. All hands are called, and at it they go. Every deck is spread with hammocks, fore and aft; and lucky are you, if you can get sufficient surface to spread your own hammock on. Down on their knees are five hundred men, scrubbing away with brushes and brooms; jostling, and crowding, and quarrelling about using each other's suds; when all their Purser's soap goes to create one indiscriminate yeast.

Sometimes you discover that, in the dark, you have been all the while scrubbing your next neighbour's hammock instead of your own. But it is too late to

begin over again; for now the word is passed for every man to advance with his hammock, that it may be tied to a net-like frame-work of clothes-lines, and hoisted aloft to dry.

That done, without delay you get together your frocks and trowsers, and on the already flooded deck embark in the laundry business. You have no special bucket or basin to yourself—the ship being one vast wash-tub, where all hands wash and rinse out, and rinse out and wash, till at last the word is passed again, to make fast your clothes, that they, also, may be elevated to dry.

Then on all three decks the operation of holy-stoning begins, so called from the queer name bestowed upon the principal instruments employed. These are ponderous flat stones with long ropes at each end, by which the stones are slidden about, to and fro, over the wet and sanded decks; a most wearisome, dog-like, galley-slave employment. For the by-ways and corners about the masts and guns, smaller stones are used, called *prayer-books*; inasmuch as the devout operator has to down with them on his knees.

Finally, a grand flooding takes place, and the decks are remorselessly thrashed with dry swabs. After which an extraordinary implement—a sort of leathern hoe called a “*squilgee*”—is used to scrape and squeeze the last dribblings of water from the planks. Concerning this “*squilgee*,” I think something of drawing up

a memoir, and reading it before the Academy of Arts and Sciences. It is a most curious affair.

By the time all these operations are concluded it is *eight bells*, and all hands are piped to breakfast upon the damp and every-way disagreeable decks.

Now, against this invariable daily flooding of the three decks of a frigate, as a man-of-war's-man, White-Jacket most earnestly protests. In sunless weather it keeps the sailor's quarters perpetually damp; so much so, that you can scarce sit down without running the risk of getting the lumbago. One rheumatic old sheet-anchor-man among us was driven to the extremity of sewing a piece of tarred canvass on the seat of his trowsers.

Let those neat and tidy officers who so love to see a ship kept spick and span clean; who institute vigorous search after the man who chances to drop the crumb of a biscuit on deck, when the ship is rolling in a sea-way; let all such swing their hammocks with the sailors, and they would soon get sick of this daily damp-ing of the decks.

Is a ship a wooden platter, that it is to be scrubbed out every morning before breakfast, even if the thermometer be at zero, and every sailor goes barefooted through the flood with the chilblains? And all the while the ship carries a doctor, well aware of Boerhaave's great maxim, "*Keep the feet dry.*" He has plenty of pills to give you when you are down with

a fever, the consequences of these things ; but enters no protest at the outset—as it is his duty to do—against the cause that induces the fever.

During the pleasant night-watches, the promenading officers, mounted on their high-heeled boots, pass dry-shod, like the Israelites, over the decks ; but by day-break the roaring tide sets back, and the poor sailors are almost overwhelmed in it, like the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

Oh ! the chills, colds, and agues that are caught ! No snug stove, grate, or fire-place to go to ; no, your only way to keep warm is to keep in a blazing passion, and anathematize the custom that every morning makes a wash-house of a man-of-war.

Look at it. Say you go on board a line-of-battle-ship : you see everything scrupulously neat ; you see all the decks clear and unobstructed as the side-walks of Wall Street of a Sunday morning ; you see no trace of a sailor's dormitory ; you marvel by what magic all this is brought about. And well you may. For consider, that in this unobstructed fabric nearly one thousand mortal men have to sleep, eat, wash, dress, cook, and perform all the ordinary functions of humanity. The same number of men ashore would expand themselves into a township. Is it credible, then, that this extraordinary neatness, and especially this *unobstructedness* of a man-of-war, can be brought about, except by the most rigorous edicts, and a very serious sacrifice,

with respect to the sailors, of the domestic comforts of life? To be sure, sailors themselves do not often complain of these things; they are used to them; but man can become used even to the hardest usage. And it is because he *is* used to it, that sometimes he does not complain of it.

Of all men-of-war, the American ships are the most excessively neat, and have the greatest reputation for it. And of all men-of-war the general discipline of the American ships is perhaps the most severe.

In the English Navy, the men liberally mess on tables, which, between meals, are triced up out of the way. The American sailors mess on the deck, and peck up their broken biscuit, or *midshipmen's nuts*, like fowls in a barn-yard.

But if this unobstructedness in an American fighting-ship be, at all hazards, so desirable, why not imitate the Turks? In the Turkish Navy they have no mess-chests; the sailors roll their mess things up in a rug, and thrust them under a gun. Nor do they have any hammocks; they sleep anywhere about the decks in their *gregoes*. Indeed, come to look at it, what more does a man-of-war's-man absolutely require to live in than his own skin? That's room enough; and room enough to turn in, if he but knew how to shift his spine, end for end, like a ramrod, without disturbing his next neighbour.

Among all man-of-war's-men, it is a maxim that over-neat vessels are Tartars to the crew; and perhaps

it may be safely laid down that, when you see such a ship, some sort of tyranny is not very far off.

In the *Neversink*, as in other national ships, the business of *holy-stoning* the decks was often prolonged, by way of punishment to the men, particularly of a raw, cold morning. This is one of the punishments which a Lieutenant of the Watch may easily inflict upon the crew, without infringing the statute which places the power of punishment solely in the hands of the Captain.

The abhorrence which man-of-war's-men have for this protracted *holy-stoning* in cold, comfortless weather—with their bare feet exposed to the splashing inundations—is shown in a strange story, rife among them, curiously tinged with their proverbial superstitions.

The First Lieutenant of an English sloop of war, a severe disciplinarian, was uncommonly particular concerning the whiteness of the quarter-deck. One bitter winter morning at sea, when the crew had washed that part of the vessel, as usual, and put away their holy-stones, this officer came on deck, and after inspecting it, ordered the *holy-stones* and *prayer-books* up again. Once more slipping off the shoes from their frosted feet, and rolling up their trowsers, the crew kneeled down to their task; and in that suppliant posture, silently invoked a curse upon their tyrant; praying, as he went below, that he might never more come out of the ward-room alive. The prayer seemed answered; for being shortly

after visited with a paralytic stroke at his breakfast-table, the First Lieutenant next morning was carried out of the ward-room feet foremost, dead. As they dropped him over the side—so goes the story—the marine sentry at the gangway turned his back upon the corpse.

To the credit of the humane and sensible portion of the roll of American navy-captains, be it added, that *they* are not so particular in keeping the decks spotless at all times, and in all weathers ; nor do they torment the men with scraping bright-wood and polishing ring-bolts ; but give all such gingerbread-work a hearty coat of black paint, which looks more warlike, is a better preservative, and exempts the sailors from a perpetual annoyance.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THEATRICALS IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

THE Neversink had summered out her last Christmas on the Equator ; she was now destined to winter out the Fourth of July not very far from the frigid latitudes of Cape Horn.

It is sometimes the custom in the American Navy to celebrate this national holiday by doubling the allowance of spirits to the men ; that is, if the ship happen to be lying in harbour. The effects of this patriotic plan may be easily imagined : the whole ship is converted into a dram-shop ; and the intoxicated sailors reel about, on all three decks, singing, howling, and fighting. This is the time that, owing to the relaxed discipline of the ship, old and almost forgotten quarrels are revived, under the stimulus of drink ; and, fencing themselves up between the guns—so as to be sure of a clear space with at least three walls—the combatants, two and two, fight out their hate, cribbed and cabined like soldiers duelling in a sentry-box. In a word, scenes ensue which would not for a single instant be tolerated by the officers upon any other occasion. This is the time that the most venerable of quarter-gunners and quarter-masters, together with the smallest apprentice boys, and men never known to have been previously intoxicated during the cruise—this is

the time that they all roll together in the same muddy trough of drunkenness.

In emulation of the potentates of the Middle Ages, some Captains augment the din by authorizing a grand gaol-delivery of all the prisoners who, on that auspicious Fourth of the month, may happen to be confined in the ship's prison—"the brig."

But from scenes like these the *Neversink* was happily delivered. Besides that she was now approaching a most perilous part of the ocean—which would have made it madness to intoxicate the sailors—her complete destitution of *grog*, even for ordinary consumption, was an obstacle altogether insuperable, even had the Captain felt disposed to indulge his man-of-war's-men by the most copious libations.

For several days previous to the advent of the holiday, frequent conferences were held on the gun-deck touching the melancholy prospects before the ship.

"Too bad—too bad!" cried a top-man. "Think of it, shipmates—a Fourth of July without *grog*!"

"I'll hoist the Commodore's pennant at half-mast that day," sighed the Signal-quarter-master.

"And I'll turn my best uniform jacket wrong side out, to keep company with the pennant, old *Ensign*," sympathetically responded an After-guard's-man.

"Ay, do!" cried a Forecastle-man. "I could almost pipe my eye to think on't."

"No *grog* on de day dat tried men's souls!" blubbered Sunshine, the galley-cook.

"Who would be a *Jankee* (Yankee) now?" roared a Hollander of the fore-top, more Dutch than sour-cROUT.

"Is this the *riglar* fruits of liberty?" touchingly inquired an Irish waister of an old Spanish sheet-anchor-man.

You will generally observe that, of all Americans, your foreign-born citizens are the most patriotic—especially toward the Fourth of July.

But how could Captain Claret, the father of his crew, behold the grief of his ocean children with indifference? He could not. Three days before the anniversary—it still continuing very pleasant weather for these latitudes—it was publicly announced that free permission was given to the sailors to get up any sort of theatricals they desired, wherewith to honour the Fourth.

Now, some weeks prior to the *Neversink's* sailing from home—nearly three years before the time here spoken of—some of the seamen had clubbed together, and made up a considerable purse, for the purpose of purchasing a theatrical outfit; having in view to diversify the monotony of lying in foreign harbours for weeks together, by an occasional display on the boards—though if ever there was a continual theatre in the world, playing by night and by day, and without intervals between the acts, a man-of-war is that theatre, and her planks are the *boards* indeed.

The sailors who originated this scheme had served in other American frigates, where the privilege of having

theatricals was allowed to the crew. What was their chagrin, then, when, upon making an application to the Captain, in a Peruvian harbour, for permission to present the much-admired drama of "*The Ruffian Boy*," under the Captain's personal patronage, that dignitary assured them that there were already enough *ruffian boys* on board, without conjuring up any more from the green-room.

The theatrical outfit, therefore, was stowed down in the bottom of the sailors' bags, who little anticipated then that it would ever be dragged out while Captain Claret had the sway.

But immediately upon the announcement that the embargo was removed, vigorous preparations were at once commenced to celebrate the Fourth with unwonted spirit. The half-deck was set apart for the theatre, and the Signal-quarter-master was commanded to loan his flags to decorate it in the most patriotic style.

As the stage-struck portion of the crew had frequently during the cruise rehearsed portions of various plays, to while away the tedium of the night-watches, they needed no long time now to perfect themselves in their parts.

Accordingly, on the very next morning after the indulgence had been granted by the Captain, the following written placard, presenting a broadside of staring capitals, was found tacked against the main-mast on the gun-deck. It was as if a Drury-Lane bill had been posted upon the London Monument.

CAPE HORN THEATRE.

Grand Celebration of the Fourth of July.

DAY PERFORMANCE.

UNCOMMON ATTRACTION.

THE OLD WAGON PAID OFF!

JACK CHASE PERCY ROYAL-MAST.

STARS OF THE FIRST MAGNITUDE.

For this time only,

THE TRUE YANKEE SAILOR.

The managers of the Cape Horn Theatre beg leave to inform the inhabitants of the Pacific and Southern Oceans that, on the afternoon of the Fourth of July, 184—, they will have the honour to present the admired drama of

THE OLD WAGON PAID OFF!

Commodore Bougee	<i>Tom Brown of the Fore-top.</i>
Captain Spy-glass	<i>Ned Brace, of the After-Guard.</i>
Commodore's Cockswain	<i>Joe Bunk of the Launch.</i>
Old Luff	<i>Quarter-master Coffin.</i>
Mayor	<i>Seafull, of the Forecastle.</i>
PERCY ROYAL-MAST	JACK CHASE.
Mrs. Lovelorn	<i>Long-locks, of the After-Guard.</i>
Toddy Moll	<i>Frank Jones.</i>
Gin and Sugar Sall	<i>Dick Dash.</i>

Sailors, Marines, Bar-keepers, Crimps, Aldermen, Police-officers, Soldiers, Landsmen generally.

Long live the Commodore! || Admission Free.

To conclude with the much-admired song by Dibdin, altered to suit all American Tars, entitled

THE TRUE YANKEE SAILOR.

True Yankee Sailor (in costume), Patrick Flinegan, Captain of the Head.

Performance to commence with "Hail Columbia," by the Brass Band. Ensign rises at three bells, P.M. No sailor permitted to enter in his shirt-sleeves. Good order is expected to be maintained. The Master-at-arms and Ship's Corporals to be in attendance to keep the peace.

At the earnest entreaties of the seamen, Lemsford, the gun-deck poet, had been prevailed upon to draw up this bill. And upon this one occasion his literary abilities were far from being underrated, even by the least intellectual person on board. Nor must it be omitted that, before the bill was placarded, Captain Claret, enacting the part of Censor and Grand Chamberlain, ran over a manuscript copy of "*The Old Wagon Paid Off*," to see whether it contained anything calculated to breed disaffection against lawful authority among the crew. He objected to some parts, but in the end let them all pass.

The morning of The Fourth—most anxiously awaited—dawned clear and fair. The breeze was steady; the air bracing cold; and one and all the sailors anticipated a gleeful afternoon. And thus was falsified the prophecies of certain old growlers averse to theatricals, who had predicted a gale of wind that would quash all the arrangements of the green-room.

As the men whose regular turns, at the time of the performance, would come round to be stationed in the tops, and at the various halyards and running ropes about the spar-deck, could not be permitted to partake in the celebration, there accordingly ensued, during the morning, many amusing scenes of tars who were anxious to procure substitutes at their posts. Through the day, many anxious glances were cast to windward; but the weather still promised fair.

At last "the people" were piped to dinner; two bells struck; and soon after, all who could be spared from their stations hurried to the half-deck. The capstan bars were placed on shot-boxes, as at prayers on Sundays, furnishing seats for the audience; while a low stage, rigged by the carpenter's gang, was built at one end of the open space. The curtain was composed of a large ensign, and the bulwarks round about were draperied with the flags of all nations. The ten or twelve members of the brass band were ranged in a row at the foot of the stage, their polished instruments in their hands, while the consequential Captain of the Band himself was elevated upon a gun-carriage.

At three bells precisely a group of ward-room officers emerged from the after hatchway, and seated themselves upon camp-stools, in a central position, with the stars and stripes for a canopy. *That* was the royal box. The sailors looked round for the Commodore; but neither Commodore nor Captain honoured "the people" with their presence.

At the call of a bugle the band struck up *Hail Columbia*, the whole audience keeping time, as at Drury Lane, when *God save the King* is played after a great national victory.

At the discharge of a marine's musket the curtain rose, and four sailors, in the picturesque garb of Maltese mariners, staggered on the stage in a feigned state of intoxication. The truthfulness of the repre-

sentation was much heightened by the roll of the ship.

"The Commodore," "Old Luff," "The Mayor," and "Gin and Sugar Sall," were played to admiration, and received great applause. But at the first appearance of that universal favourite, Jack Chase, in the chivalric character of "*Percy Royal-Mast*," the whole audience simultaneously rose to their feet, and greeted him with three hearty cheers, that almost took the main-top-sail aback.

Matchless Jack, *in full fig*, bowed again and again, with true quarter-deck grace and self-possession; and when five or six untwisted strands of rope and bunches of oakum were thrown to him, as substitutes for bouquets, he took them one by one, and gallantly hung them from the buttons of his jacket.

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!—go on! go on!—stop hollering—hurrah!—go on!—stop hollering—hurrah!" was now heard on all sides, till at last, seeing no end to the enthusiasm of his ardent admirers, Matchless Jack stepped forward, and, with his lips moving in pantomime, plunged into the thick of the part. Silence soon followed, but was fifty times broken by uncontrollable bursts of applause. At length, when that heart-thrilling scene came on, where Percy Royal-Mast rescues fifteen oppressed sailors from the watch-house, in the teeth of a posse of constables, the audience leaped to their feet, overturned the capstan bars, and

to a man hurled their hats on the stage in a delirium of delight. Ah, Jack, that was a ten-stroke indeed !

The commotion was now terrific ; all discipline seemed gone for ever ; the Lieutenants ran in among the men the Captain darted from his cabin, and the Commodore nervously questioned the armed sentry at his door as to what the deuce "the people" were about. In the midst of all this, the trumpet of the Officer-of-the-deck, commanding the top-gallant sails to be taken in, was almost completely drowned. A black squall was coming down on the weather-bow, and the boatswain's mates bellowed themselves hoarse at the main-hatchway. There is no knowing what would have ensued, had not the bass drum suddenly been heard, calling all hands to quarters, a summons not to be withstood. The sailors pricked their ears at it, as horses at the sound of a cracking whip, and confusedly stumbled up the ladders to their stations. The next moment all was silent but the wind, howling like a thousand devils in the cordage.

"Stand by to reef all three top-sails !—settle away the halyards !—haul out—so : make fast !—aloft, top-men ! and reef away !"

Thus, in storm and tempest terminated that day's theatricals. But the sailors never recovered from the disappointment of not having the "*True Yankee Sailor*" sung by the Irish Captain of the Head.

And here White-Jacket must moralize a bit. The unwonted spectacle of the row of gun-room officers mingling with "the people" in applauding a mere seaman like Jack Chase, filled me at the time with the most pleasurable emotions. It is a sweet thing, thought I, to see these officers confess a human brotherhood with us, after all; a sweet thing to mark their cordial appreciation of the manly merits of my matchless Jack. Ah! they are noble fellows all round, and I do not know but I have wronged them sometimes in my thoughts.

Nor was it without similar pleasurable feelings that I witnessed the temporary rupture of the ship's stern discipline, consequent upon the tumult of the theatricals. I thought to myself, this now is as it should be. It is good to shake off, now and then, this iron yoke round our necks. And after having once permitted us sailors to be a little noisy, in a harmless way—somewhat merrily turbulent—the officers cannot, with any good grace, be so excessively stern and unyielding as before. I began to think a man-of-war a man-of-peace-and-good-will, after all. But, alas! disappointment came.

Next morning the same old scene was enacted at the gangway. And beholding the row of uncompromising-looking officers there assembled with the Captain, to witness punishment—the same officers who had been so cheerfully disposed over night—an old sailor touched

my shoulder, and said, "See, White-Jacket, all round they have *shipped their quarter-deck faces again*. But this is the way."

I afterwards learned that this was an old man-of-war's-man's phrase, expressive of the facility with which a sea-officer falls back upon all the severity of his dignity, after a temporary suspension of it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

INTRODUCTORY TO CAPE HORN.

AND now, through drizzling fogs and vapours, and under damp, double-reefed top-sails, our wet-decked frigate drew nearer and nearer to the squally Cape.

Who has not heard of it? Cape Horn, Cape Horn—a *horn* indeed, that has tossed many a good ship. Was the descent of Orpheus, Ulysses, or Dante into Hell, one whit more hardy and sublime than the first navigator's weathering of that terrible Cape?

Turned on her heel by a fierce West Wind, many an outward-bound ship has been driven across the Southern Ocean to the Cape of Good Hope—that way to seek a passage to the Pacific. And that stormy Cape, I doubt not, has sent many a fine craft to the bottom, and told no tales. At those ends of the earth are no chronicles. What signify the broken spars and shrouds that, day after day, are driven before the prows of more fortunate vessels? or the tall masts, imbedded in icebergs, that are found floating by? They but hint the old story—of ships that have sailed from their ports, and never more have been heard of.

Impracticable Cape! You may approach it from this direction or that—in any way you please—from the east, or from the west; with the wind astern, or abeam, or on

the quarter ; and still Cape Horn is Cape Horn. Cape Horn it is that takes the conceit out of fresh-water sailors, and steeps in a still salter brine the saltiest. Woe betide the tyro ! the fool-hardy, Heaven preserve !

Your Mediterranean captain, who with a cargo of oranges has hitherto made merry runs across the Atlantic, without so much as furling a t'-gallant-sail, oftentimes, off Cape Horn, receives a lesson which he carries to the grave ; though the grave—as is too often the case—follows so hard on the lesson that no benefit comes from the experience.

Other strangers who draw nigh to this Patagonia termination of our continent, with their souls full of its shipwrecks and disasters—top-sails cautiously reefed, and everything guardedly snug—these strangers at first unexpectedly encountering a tolerably smooth sea, rashly conclude that the Cape, after all, is but a bugbear ; they have been imposed upon by fables, and foundering and sinkings hereabouts are all cock-and-bull stories.

“ Out reefs, my hearties ; fore and aft set t'-gallant-sails ! stand by to give her the fore-top-mast stun'-sail ! ”

But, Captain Rash, those sails of yours were much safer in the sail-maker's loft. For now, while the heedless craft is bounding over the billows, a black cloud rises out of the sea ; the sun drops down from the sky ; a horrible mist far and wide spreads over the water.

“Hands by the halyards! Let go! Clew up!”

Too late.

For ere the ropes' ends can be cast off from the pins, the tornado is blowing down to the bottom of their throats. The masts are willows, the sails ribbons, the cordage wool; the whole ship is brewed into the yeast of the gale.

And now, if, when the first green sea breaks over him, Captain Rash is not swept overboard, he has his hands full, be sure. In all probability his three masts have gone by the board; and, ravelled into list, his sails are floating in the air. Or, perhaps, the ship *broaches to*, or is *brought by the lee*. In either case, Heaven help the sailors, their wives, and their little ones; and Heaven help the underwriters.

Familiarity with danger makes a brave man braver, but less daring. Thus with seamen: he who goes the oftenest round Cape Horn goes the most circumspectly. A veteran mariner is never deceived by the treacherous breezes which sometimes waft him pleasantly toward the latitude of the Cape. No sooner does he come within a certain distance of it—previously fixed in his own mind—than all hands are turned to setting the ship in storm-trim; and, never mind how light the breeze, down come his t'-gallant-yards. He “bends” his strongest storm-sails, and lashes every thing on deck securely. The ship is then ready for the worst; and if, in reeling round the headland, she receives

a broadside, it generally goes well with her. If ill, all hands go to the bottom with quiet consciences.

Among sea-captains, there are some who seem to regard the genius of the Cape as a wilful, capricious jade, that must be courted and coaxed into complaisance. First, they come along under easy sail ; do not steer boldly for the headland, but tack this way and that—sidling up to it. Now they woo the Jezebel with a t'-gallant-studding-sail ; anon, they deprecate her wrath with double-reefed-top-sails. When, at length, her unappeasable fury is fairly aroused, and all round the dismantled ship the storm howls and howls for days together, they still persevere in their efforts. First, they try unconditional submission ; furling every rag and *heaving to* ; laying like a log, for the tempest to toss wheresoever it pleases.

This failing, they set a *spencer* or *try-sail*, and shift on the other tack. Equally vain ! The gale sings as hoarsely as before. At last, the wind comes round fair ; they drop the fore-sail ; square the yards, and scud before it : their implacable foe chasing them with tornadoes, as if to show her insensibility to the last.

Other ships, without encountering these terrible gales, spend week after week endeavouring to turn this boisterous world-corner against a continual head-wind. Tacking hither and thither, in the language of sailors, they *polish* the Cape by beating about its edges so long.

Le Mair and Schouten, two Dutchmen, were the first

navigators who weathered Cape Horn. Previous to this, passages had been made to the Pacific by the Straits of Magellan; nor, indeed, at that period, was it known to a certainty that there was any other route, or that the land now called Terra del Fuego was an island. A few leagues southward from Terra del Fuego is a cluster of small islands, the Diegoes; between which and the former island are the Straits of Le Mair, so called in honour of their discoverer, who first sailed through them into the Pacific. Le Mair and Schouten, in their small, clumsy vessels, encountered a series of tremendous gales, the prelude to the long train of similar hardships which most of their followers have experienced. It is a significant fact, that Schouten's vessel, the *Horne*, which gave its name to the Cape, was almost lost in weathering it.

The next navigator round the Cape was Sir Francis Drake, who, on Raleigh's Expedition, beholding for the first time, from the Isthmus of Darien, the "goodlie South Sea," like a true-born Englishman vowed, please God, to sail an English ship thereon; which the gallant sailor did, to the sore discomfiture of the Spaniards on the coasts of Chili and Peru.

But perhaps the greatest hardships on record, in making this celebrated passage, were those experienced by Lord Anson's squadron in 1736. Three remarkable and most interesting narratives record their disasters and sufferings. The first, jointly written by the

carpenter and gunner of the *Wager*; the second, by young Byron, a midshipman in the same ship; the third, by the chaplain of the *Centurion*. White-Jacket has them all; and they are fine reading of a boisterous March night, with the casement rattling in your ear, and the chimney-stacks blowing down upon the pavement, bubbling with rain-drops.

But if you want the best idea of Cape Horn, get my friend Dana's unmatched "Two Years before the Mast." But you can read, and so you must have read it. His chapters describing Cape Horn must have been written with an icicle.

At the present day the horrors of the Cape have somewhat abated. This is owing to a growing familiarity with it; but, more than all, to the improved condition of ships in all respects, and the means now generally in use of preserving the health of the crews in times of severe and prolonged exposure.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DOG-DAYS OFF CAPE HORN.

COLDER and colder ; we are drawing nigh to the Cape. Now gregoes, pea jackets, monkey jackets, reefing jackets, storm jackets, oil jackets, paint jackets, round jackets, short jackets, long jackets, and all manner of jackets, are the order of the day, not excepting the immortal white jacket, which begins to be sturdily buttoned up to the throat, and pulled down vigorously at the skirts, to bring them well over the loins.

But, alas ! those skirts were lamentably scanty ; and though, with its quiltings, the jacket was stuffed out about the breasts like a Christmas turkey, and of a dry cold day kept the wearer warm enough in that vicinity, yet about the loins it was shorter than a ballet-dancer's skirts ; so that while my chest was in the temperate zone, close adjoining the torrid, my hapless thighs were in Nova Zembla, hardly an icicle's toss from the Pole.

Then, again, the repeated soakings and dryings it had undergone had by this time made it shrink woefully all over, especially in the arms, so that the wristbands had gradually crawled up near to the elbows ; and it

required an energetic thrust to push the arm through, in drawing the jacket on.

I endeavoured to amend these misfortunes by sewing a sort of canvass ruffle round the skirts, by way of a continuation or supplement to the original work, and by doing the same with the wristbands.

This is the time for oil-skin suits, dreadnoughts, tarred trowsers and overalls, sea-boots, comforters, mittens, woollen socks, Guernsey frocks, Havre shirts, buffalo-robe shirts, and moose-skin drawers. Every man's jacket is his wigwam, and every man's hat his caboose.

Perfect licence is now permitted to the men respecting their clothing. Whatever they can rake and scrape together they put on—swaddling themselves in old sails, and drawing old socks over their heads for night-caps. This is the time for smiting your chest with your hand, and talking loud to keep up the circulation.

Colder, and colder, and colder, till at last we spoke a fleet of icebergs bound North. After that, it was one incessant "*cold snap*," that almost snapped off our fingers and toes. Cold ! It was cold as *Blue Flujin*, where sailors say fire freezes.

And now coming up with the latitude of the Cape, we stood southward to give it a wide berth, and while so doing were becalmed ; ay, becalmed off Cape Horn, which is worse, far worse, than being becalmed on the Line.

Here we lay forty-eight hours, during which the cold was intense. I wondered at the liquid sea, which refused to freeze in such a temperature. The clear, cold sky overhead looked like a steel-blue cymbal, that might ring, could you smite it. Our breath came and went like puffs of smoke from pipe-bowls. At first there was a long, gawky swell, that obliged us to furl most of the sails, and even send down t'-gallant-yards, for fear of pitching them overboard.

Out of sight of land, at this extremity of both the inhabitable and uninhabitable world, our peopled frigate, echoing with the voices of men, the bleating of lambs, the cackling of fowls, the gruntings of pigs, seemed like Noah's old ark itself, becalmed at the climax of the Deluge.

There was nothing to be done but patiently to await the pleasure of the elements, and "whistle for a wind," the usual practice of seamen in a calm. No fire was allowed, except for the indispensable purpose of cooking, and heating bottles of water to toast Selvagee's feet. He who possessed the largest stock of vitality, stood the best chance to escape freezing. It was horrifying. In such weather any man could have undergone amputation with great ease, and helped take up the arteries himself.

Indeed, this state of affairs had not lasted quite twenty-four hours, when the extreme frigidity of the air, united to our increased tendency to inactivity,

would very soon have rendered some of us subjects for the surgeon and his mates, had not a humane proceeding of the Captain suddenly impelled us to vigorous exercise.

And here be it said, that the appearance of the Boatswain, with his silver whistle to his mouth, at the main hatchway of the gun-deck, is always regarded by the crew with the utmost curiosity, for this betokens that some general order is about to be promulgated through the ship. What now? is the question that runs on from man to man. A short preliminary whistle is then given by "Old Yarn," as they call him, which whistle serves to collect round him, from their various stations, his four mates. Then Yarn, or Pipes, as leader of the orchestra, begins a peculiar call, in which his assistants join. This over, the order, whatever it may be, is loudly sung out and prolonged, till the remotest corner echoes again. The Boatswain and his mates are the town-criers of a man-of-war.

The calm had commenced in the afternoon ; and the following morning the ship's company were electrified by a general order, thus set forth and declared : "*D'ye hear there, fore and aft ! all hands skylark !*"

This mandate, nowadays never used except upon very rare occasions, produced the same effect upon the men that Exhilarating Gas would have done, or an extra allowance of "grog." For a time, the wonted discipline of the ship was broken through, and perfect

license allowed. It was a Babel here, a Bedlam there, and a Pandemonium everywhere. The Theatricals were nothing compared with it. Then the faint-hearted and timorous crawled to their hiding-places, and the lusty and bold shouted forth their glee. Gangs of men, in all sorts of outlandish habiliments, wild as those worn at some crazy carnival, rushed to and fro, seizing upon whomsoever they pleased—warrant-officers and dangerous pugilists excepted—pulling and hauling the luckless tars about, till fairly baited into a genial warmth. Some were made fast to, and hoisted aloft with a will; others, mounted upon oars, were ridden fore and aft on a rail, to the boisterous mirth of the spectators, any one of whom might be the next victim. Swings were rigged from the tops, or the masts; and the most reluctant wights being purposely selected, spite of all struggles, were swung from East to West, in vast arcs of circles, till almost breathless. Hornpipes, fandangoes, Donnybrook-jigs, reels, and quadrilles, were danced under the very nose of the most mighty captain, and upon the very quarter-deck and poop. Sparring and wrestling, too, were all the vogue; *Kentucky bites* were given, and the *Indian hug* exchanged. The din frightened the sea-fowl, that flew by with accelerated wing.

It is worth mentioning that several casualties occurred, of which, however, I will relate but one. While the “skylarking” was at its height, one of the fore-top-men—an ugly-tempered devil of a Portuguese, looking

on—swore that he would be the death of any man who laid violent hands upon his inviolable person. This threat being overheard, a band of desperadoes, coming up from behind, tripped him up in an instant, and in the twinkling of an eye the Portuguese was straddling an oar, borne aloft by an uproarious multitude, who rushed him along the deck at a railroad gallop. The living mass of arms all round and beneath him was so dense, that every time he inclined to one side he was instantly pushed upright, but only to fall over again, to receive another push from the contrary direction. Presently, disengaging his hands from those who held them, the enraged seaman drew from his bosom an iron belaying-pin, and recklessly laid about him to right and left. Most of his persecutors fled ; but some eight or ten still stood their ground, and, while bearing him aloft, endeavoured to wrest the weapon from his hands. In this attempt one man was struck on the head, and dropped insensible. He was taken up for dead, and carried below to Cuticle, the surgeon, while the Portuguese was put under guard. But the wound did not prove very serious ; and in a few days the man was walking about the deck, with his head well bandaged.

This occurrence put an end to the “skylarking,” further head-breaking being strictly prohibited. In due time the Portuguese paid the penalty of his rashness at the gangway ; where once again the officers *shipped their quarter-deck faces.*

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PITCH OF THE CAPE.

ERE the calm had yet left us, a sail had been discerned from the fore-top-mast-head, at a great distance, probably three leagues or more. At first it was a mere speck, altogether out of sight from the deck. By the force of attraction, or something else equally inscrutable, two ships in a calm, and equally affected by the currents, will always approximate, more or less. Though there was not a breath of wind, it was not a great while before the strange sail was descried from our bulwarks; gradually, it drew still nearer.

What was she, and whence? There is no object which so excites interest and conjecture, and, at the same time, baffles both, as a sail, seen as a mere speck on these remote seas off Cape Horn.

A breeze! a breeze! for lo! the stranger is now perceptibly nearing the frigate; the officer's spy-glass pronounces her a full-rigged ship, with all sail set, and coming right down to us, though in our own vicinity the calm still reigns.

She is bringing the wind with her. Hurrah! Ay, there it is! Behold how mincingly it creeps over the sea, just ruffling and crisping it.

Our top-men were at once sent aloft to loose the sails, and presently they faintly began to distend. As yet we hardly had steerage way. Toward sunset the stranger bore down before the wind, a complete pyramid of canvass. Never before, I venture to say, was Cape Horn so audaciously insulted. Stun'-sails alow and aloft; royals, moon-sails, and everything else. She glided under our stern, within hailing distance, and the signal-quarter-master ran up our ensign to the gaff.

"Ship ahoy!" cried the Lieutenant of the Watch, through his trumpet.

"Halloa!" bawled an old fellow in a green jacket, clapping one hand to his mouth, while he held on with the other to the mizzen-shrouds.

"What ship's that?"

"The Sultan, Indiaman, from New York, and bound to Callao and Canton, sixty days out, all well. What frigate's that?"

"The United States ship Neversink, homeward bound."

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" yelled our enthusiastic countryman, transported with patriotism.

By this time the Sultan had swept past, but the Lieutenant of the Watch could not withhold a parting admonition.

"D'ye hear? You'd better take in some of your flying-kites there. Look out for Cape Horn!"

But the friendly advice was lost in the now increasing

wind. With a suddenness by no means unusual in these latitudes, the light breeze soon became a succession of sharp squalls, and our sail-proud braggadocio of an Indiaman was observed to let every thing go by the run, his t'-gallant stun'-sails and flying-jib taking quick leave of the spars ; the flying-jib was swept into the air, rolled together for a few minutes, and tossed about in the squalls like a foot-ball. But the wind played no such pranks with the more prudently managed canvass of the Neversink, though before many hours it was stirring times with us.

About midnight, when the starboard watch, to which I belonged, was below, the boatswain's whistle was heard, followed by the shrill cry for "*All hands take in sail ! jump men, and save ship !*"

Springing from our hammocks, we found the frigate leaning over to it so steeply, that it was with difficulty we could climb the ladders leading to the upper deck.

Here the scene was awful. The vessel seemed to be sailing on her side. The main-deck guns had several days previously been run in and housed, and the port-holes closed, but the lee carronades on the quarter-deck and forecastle were plunging through the sea, which undulated over them in milk-white billows of foam. With every lurch to leeward the yard-arm-ends seemed to dip in the sea, while forward the spray dashed over the bows in cataracts, and drenched the men who were on the fore-yard. By this time the deck was alive with the whole strength of the ship's company, five hundred

men, officers and all, mostly clinging to the weather bulwarks. The occasional phosphorescence of the yeasty sea cast a glare upon their uplifted faces, as a night fire in a populous city lights up the panic-stricken crowd.

In a sudden gale, or when a large quantity of sail is suddenly to be furled, it is the custom for the First Lieutenant to take the trumpet from whoever happens then to be officer of the deck. But Mad Jack had the trumpet that watch ; nor did the First Lieutenant now seek to wrest it from his hands. Every eye was upon him, as if we had chosen him from among us all, to decide this battle with the elements, by single combat with the spirit of the Cape ; for Mad Jack was the saving genius of the ship, and so proved himself that night. I owe this right hand, that is this moment flying over my sheet, and all my present being to Mad Jack. The ship's bows were now butting, battering, ramming, and thundering over and upon the head seas, and with a horrible wallowing sound our whole hull was rolling in the trough of the foam. The gale came athwart the deck, and every sail seemed bursting with its wild breath.

All the quarter-masters, and several of the forecattle-men, were swarming round the double-wheel on the quarter-deck. Some jumping up and down, with their hands upon the spokes ; for the whole helm and galvanized keel were fiercely feverish with the life imparted to them by the tempest.

“Hard *up* the helm !” shouted Captain Claret, bursting from his cabin like a ghost, in his night-dress.

“Damn you!” raged Mad Jack to the quarter-masters; “hard *down*—hard *down*, I say, and be damned to you!”

Contrary orders! but Mad Jack’s were obeyed. His object was to throw the ship into the wind, so as the better to admit of close-reefing the top-sails. But though the halyards were let go, it was impossible to clew down the yards, owing to the enormous horizontal strain on the canvass. It now blew a hurricane. The spray flew over the ship in floods. The gigantic masts seemed about to snap under the world-wide strain of the three entire top-sails.

“Clew down! clew down!” shouted Mad Jack, husky with excitement, and in a frenzy, beating his trumpet against one of the shrouds. But, owing to the slant of the ship, the thing could not be done. It was obvious that before many minutes something must go—either sails, rigging, or sticks; perhaps the hull itself, and all hands.

Presently a voice from the top exclaimed that there was a rent in the main-top-sail. And instantly we heard a report like two or three muskets discharged together; the vast sail was rent up and down like the Vail of the Temple. This saved the main-mast; for the yard was now clewed down with comparative ease, and the top-men laid out to stow the shattered canvass. Soon, the two remaining top-sails were also clewed down and close reefed.

Above all the roar of the tempest and the shouts of the crew, was heard the dismal tolling of the ship's bell—almost as large as that of a village church—which the violent rolling of the ship was occasioning. Imagination cannot conceive the horror of such a sound in a night-tempest at sea.

“Stop that ghost!” roared Mad Jack; “away, one of you, and wrench off the clapper!”

But no sooner was this ghost gagged, than a still more appalling sound was heard, the rolling to and fro of the heavy shot, which, on the gun-deck, had broken loose from the gun-racks, and converted that part of the ship into an immense bowling-alley. Some hands were sent down to secure them; but it was as much as their lives were worth. Several were maimed; and the midshipmen who were ordered to see the duty performed reported it impossible, until the storm abated.

The most terrific job of all was to furl the main-sail, which, at the commencement of the squalls, had been clewed up, coaxed and quieted as much as possible with the bunt-lines and slab-lines. Mad Jack waited some time for a lull, ere he gave an order so perilous to be executed. For to furl this enormous sail, in such a gale, required at least fifty men on the yard; whose weight, superadded to that of the ponderous stick itself, still further jeopardized their lives. But there was no prospect of a cessation of the gale, and the order was at last given.

At this time a hurricane of slanting sleet and hail was descending upon us; the rigging was coated with a thin glare of ice, formed within the hour.

“ Aloft, main-yard-men ! and all you main-top-men ! and furl the main-sail ! ” cried Mad Jack.

I dashed down my hat, slipped out of my quilted jacket in an instant, kicked the shoes from my feet, and, with a crowd of others, sprang for the rigging. Above the bulwarks (which in a frigate are so high as to afford much protection to those on deck) the gale was horrible. The sheer force of the wind flattened us to the rigging as we ascended, and every hand seemed congealing to the icy shrouds by which we held.

“ Up—up, my brave hearties ! ” shouted Mad Jack ; and up we got, some way or other, all of us, and groped our way out on the yard-arms.

“ Hold on, every mother’s son ! ” cried an old quarter-gunner at my side. He was bawling at the top of his compass ; but in the gale, he seemed to be whispering ; and I only heard him from his being right to windward of me.

But his hint was unnecessary ; I dug my nails into the *jack-stays*, and swore that nothing but death should part me and them until I was able to turn round and look to windward. As yet, this was impossible ; I could scarcely hear the man to leeward at my elbow ; the wind seemed to snatch the words from his mouth and fly away with them to the South Pole.

All this while the sail itself was flying about, sometimes catching over our head, and threatening to tear us from the yard in spite of all our hugging. For about three quarters of an hour we thus hung suspended right over the rampant billows, which curled their very crests under the feet of some four or five of us clinging to the lee-yard-arm, as if to float us from our place.

Presently, the word passed along the yard from windward, that we were ordered to come down and leave the sail to blow, since it could not be furled. A midshipman, it seemed, had been sent up by the officer of the deck to give the order, as no trumpet could be heard where we were.

Those on the weather yard-arm managed to crawl upon the spar and scramble down the rigging ; but with us, upon the extreme leeward side, this feat was out of the question ; it was, literally, like climbing a precipice to get to windward in order to reach the shrouds ; besides the entire yard was now encased in ice, and our hands and feet were so numb that we dare not trust our lives to them. Nevertheless, by assisting each other, we contrived to throw ourselves prostrate along the yard, and embrace it with our arms and legs. In this position, the stun'-sail-booms greatly assisted in securing our hold. Strange as it may appear, I do not suppose that, at this moment, the slightest sensation of fear was felt by one man on that

yard. We clung to it with might and main; but this was instinct. The truth is, that, in circumstances like these, the sense of fear is annihilated in the unutterable sights that fill all the eye, and the sounds that fill all the ear. You become identified with the tempest; your insignificance is lost in the riot of the stormy universe around.

Below us, our noble frigate seemed thrice its real length—a vast black wedge, opposing its widest end to the combined fury of the sea and wind.

At length the first fury of the gale began to abate, and we at once fell to pounding our hands, as a preliminary operation to going to work; for a gang of men had now ascended to help secure what was left of the sail; we somehow packed it away, at last, and came down.

About noon the next day, the gale so moderated that we shook two reefs out of the top-sails, set new courses, and stood due east with the wind astern.

Thus, all the fine weather we encountered after first weighing anchor on the pleasant Spanish coast, was but the prelude to this one terrific night; more especially, that treacherous calm immediately preceding it. But how could we reach our long-promised homes without encountering Cape Horn? by what possibility avoid it?

And though some ships have weathered it without these perils, yet by far the greater part must encounter them. Lucky it is that it comes about midway in the

homeward-bound passage, so that the sailors have time to prepare for it, and time to recover from it after it is astern.

But, sailor or landsman, there is some sort of a Cape Horn for all. Boys! beware of it; prepare for it in time. Graybeards! thank God it is passed. And ye lucky livers, to whom by some rare fatality your Cape Horns are placid as Lake Lemans, flatter not yourselves that good luck is judgment and discretion; for all the yolk in your eggs, you might have foundered and gone down, had the Spirit of the Cape said the word.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SOME THOUGHTS GROWING OUT OF MAD JACK'S COUNTERMANDING HIS
SUPERIOR'S ORDER.

IN time of peril, like the needle to the loadstone, obedience, irrespective of rank, generally flies to him who is best fitted to command. The truth of this seemed evinced in the case of Mad Jack, during the gale, and especially at that perilous moment when he countermanded the Captain's order at the helm. But every seaman knew, at the time, that the Captain's order was an unwise one in the extreme; perhaps worse than unwise.

These two orders, given by the Captain and his Lieutenant, exactly contrasted their characters. By putting the helm *hard up*, the Captain was for *scudding*; that is, for flying away from the gale. Whereas, Mad Jack was for running the ship into its teeth. It is needless to say that, in almost all cases of similar hard squalls and gales, the latter step, though attended with more appalling appearances, is, in reality, the safer of the two, and the most generally adopted.

Scudding makes you a slave to the blast, which drives you headlong before it; but *running up into the wind's eye* enables you, in a degree, to hold it at bay.

Scudding exposes to the gale your stern, the weakest part of your hull ; the contrary course presents to it your bows, your strongest part. As with ships, so with men ; he who turns his back to his foe gives him an advantage. Whereas, our ribbed chests, like the ribbed bows of a frigate, are as bulk-heads to dam off an onset.

That night, off the pitch of the Cape, Captain Claret was hurried forth from his disguises, and, at a manhood-testing conjuncture, appeared in his true colours. A thing which every man in the ship had long suspected, that night was proved true. Hitherto, in going about the ship, and casting his glances among the men, the peculiarly lustreless repose of the Captain's eye—his slow, even, unnecessarily methodical step, and the forced firmness of his whole demeanour—though, to a casual observer, seemingly expressive of the consciousness of command and a desire to strike subjection among the crew—all this, to some minds, had only been deemed indications of the fact that Captain Claret, while carefully shunning positive excesses, continually kept himself in an uncertain equilibrio between soberness and its reverse ; which equilibrio might be destroyed by the first sharp vicissitude of events.

And though this is only a surmise, nevertheless, as having some knowledge of brandy and mankind, White-Jacket will venture to state that, had Captain Claret been an out-and-out temperance man, he would never

have given that most imprudent order to *hard up* the helm. He would either have held his peace, and stayed in his cabin, like his gracious majesty the Commodore, or else have anticipated Mad Jack's order, and thundered forth "Hard down the helm!"

To show how little real sway at times have the severest restrictive laws, and how spontaneous is the instinct of discretion in some minds, it must here be added, that though Mad Jack, under a hot impulse, had countermanded an order of his superior officer before his very face, yet that severe Article of War, to which he thus rendered himself obnoxious, was never enforced against him. Nor, so far as any of the crew ever knew, did the Captain even venture to reprimand him for his temerity.

It has been said that Mad Jack himself was a lover of strong drink. So he was. But here we only see the virtue of being placed in a station constantly demanding a cool head and steady nerves, and the misfortune of filling a post that does *not* at all times demand these qualities. So exact and methodical in most things was the discipline of the frigate, that, to a certain extent, Captain Claret was exempted from personal interposition in many of its current events, and thereby, perhaps, was he lulled into security, under the enticing lee of his decanter.

But as for Mad Jack, he must stand his regular watches, and pace the quarter-deck at night, and keep

a sharp eye to windward. Hence, at sea, Mad Jack tried to make a point of keeping sober, though in very fine weather he was sometimes betrayed into a glass too many; and got himself into difficulties, as has been mentioned elsewhere. But with Cape Horn before him, he took the temperance pledge outright, till that perilous promontory should be far astern.

The leading incident of the gale irresistibly invites the question, Are there incompetent officers in the American Navy?—that is, incompetent to the due performance of whatever duties may devolve upon them. But in that gallant marine, which, during the Late War, gained so much of what is called *glory*, can there possibly be to-day incompetent officers?

As in the camp ashore, so on the quarter-deck at sea—the trumpets of one victory drown the muffled drums of a thousand defeats. And, in degree, this holds true of those events of war which are neuter in their character, neither making renown nor disgrace. Besides, as a long array of ciphers, led by but one solitary numeral, swells, by mere force of aggregation, into an immense arithmetical sum; even so, in some brilliant actions, do a crowd of officers, each inefficient in himself, aggregate renown, when banded together, and led by a numeral Nelson or a Wellington. And the renown of such heroes, by outliving themselves, descends as a heritage to their subordinate survivors. One large brain and one large heart have virtue sufficient to mag-

netize a whole fleet or an army. And if all the men who, since the beginning of the world, have mainly contributed to the warlike successes of nations, were now mustered together, we should be amazed to behold but a handful of heroes. For there is no heroism in merely running in and out a gun at a port-hole, enveloped in smoke and vapour, or in firing off muskets in platoons at the word of command. This kind of merely manual valour is often born of trepidation at the heart. There may be men, individually craven, who, united, may display even temerity. Yet it would be false to deny that, in some instances, the lowest privates have acquitted themselves with even more gallantry than their commodores. True heroism is not in the hand, but in the heart and the head.

But are there incompetent officers in the gallant American navy? For an American, the question is of no grateful cast. White-Jacket must again evade it, by referring to an historical fact in the history of a kindred marine, which, from its long standing and magnitude, furnishes many more examples of all kinds than our own. And this is the only reason why it is ever referred to in this narrative. I thank God I am free from all national invidiousness.

It is indirectly on record in the books of the English Admiralty, that in the year 1808—after the death of Lord Nelson—when Lord Collingwood commanded on the Mediterranean station, and his broken health

induced him to solicit a furlough, that out of a list of upwards of one hundred admirals, not a single officer was found who was deemed qualified to relieve the applicant with credit to the country. This fact Collingwood sealed with his life; for, hopeless of being recalled, he shortly after died, worn out, at his post. Now, if this was the case in so renowned a marine as England's, what must be inferred with respect to our own? But herein no special disgrace is involved. For the truth is, that to be an accomplished and skilful naval generalissimo needs natural capabilities of an uncommon order. Still more, it may safely be asserted, that, worthily to command even a frigate, requires a degree of natural heroism, talent, judgment, and integrity, that is denied to mediocrity. Yet these qualifications are not only required, but demanded; and no one has a right to be a naval captain unless he possesses them.

Regarding Lieutenants, there are not a few Selvagees and Paper Jacks in the American navy. Many Commodores know that they have seldom taken a line-of-battle ship to sea, without feeling more or less nervousness when some of the Lieutenants have the deck at night.

According to the last Navy Register (1849), there are now 68 Captains in the American navy, collectively drawing about \$300,000 annually from the public treasury; also, 297 Commanders, drawing about \$200,000; and 377 Lieutenants, drawing about half a million; and

451 Midshipmen (including Passed-midshipmen), also drawing nearly half a million. Considering the known facts, that some of these officers are seldom or never sent to sea, owing to the Navy Department being well aware of their inefficiency ; that others are detailed for pen-and-ink work at observatories, and solvers of logarithms in the Coast Survey ; while the really meritorious officers, who are accomplished practical seamen, are known to be sent from ship to ship, with but a small interval of a furlough ; considering all this, it is not too much to say, that no small portion of the million and a half of money above mentioned is annually paid to national pensioners in disguise, who live on the navy without serving it.

Nothing like this can be even insinuated against the "*forward officers*"—Boatswains, Gunners, &c. ; nor against the *petty officers*—Captains of the Tops, &c. ; nor against the able seamen in the navy. For if any of *these* are found wanting, they are forthwith disrated or discharged.

True, all experience teaches, that whenever there is a great national establishment, employing large numbers of officials, the public must be reconciled to support many incompetent men ; for such is the favouritism and nepotism always prevailing in the purlieus of these establishments, that some incompetent persons are always admitted, to the exclusion of many of the worthy.

Nevertheless, in a country like ours, boasting of the political equality of all social conditions, it is a great reproach that such a thing as a common seaman rising to the rank of a commissioned officer in our navy is nowadays almost unheard of. Yet, in former times, when officers have so risen to rank, they have generally proved of signal usefulness in the service, and sometimes have reflected solid honour upon the country. Instances in point might be mentioned.

Is it not well to have our institutions of a piece? Any American landsman may hope to become President of the Union—commodore of our squadron of states. And every American sailor should be placed in such a position, that he might freely aspire to command a squadron of frigates.

But if there is good reason to believe, that there are some incompetent officers in our navy; we have still better, and more abundant reason to know, that there are others, whom both nature and art have united in eminently qualifying for it; and whom the service does not so much honour, as they may be said to honour it.

And the only purpose of this chapter is, to point out as the peculiar desert of individuals, that generalized reputation, which most men, perhaps, are apt to ascribe in the gross, to one and all the members of a popular military establishment.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

EDGING AWAY.

RIGHT before the wind ! Ay, blow, blow, ye breezes ; so long as ye stay fair, and we are homeward bound, what care the jolly crew ?

It is worth mentioning here that, in nineteen cases out of twenty, a passage from the Pacific round the Cape is almost sure to be much shorter, and attended with less hardship, than a passage undertaken from the Atlantic. The reason is, that the gales are mostly from the westward, also the currents.

But, after all, going before the wind in a frigate, in such a tempest, has its annoyances and drawbacks, as well as many other blessings. The disproportionate weight of metal upon the spar and gun-decks induces a violent rolling, unknown to merchant ships. We rolled and rolled on our way, like the world in its orbit, shipping green seas on both sides, until the old frigate dipped and went into it like a diving-bell.

The hatchways of some armed vessels are but poorly secured in bad weather. This was peculiarly the case with those of the *Neversink*. They were merely spread over with an old tarpaulin, cracked and rent in every direction.

In fair weather, the ship's company messed on the gun-deck ; but as this was now flooded almost continually, we were obliged to take our meals upon the berth-deck, the next one below. One day, the messes of the starboard-watch were seated here at dinner ; forming little groups, twelve or fifteen men in each, reclining about the beef-kids and their pots and pans ; when all of a sudden the ship was seized with such a paroxysm of rolling that, in a single instant, everything on the berth-deck—pots, kids, sailors, pieces of beef, bread-bags, clothes-bags, and barges—were tossed indiscriminately from side to side. It was impossible to stay one's self ; there was nothing but the bare deck to cling to, which was slippery with the contents of the kids, and heaving under us as if there were a volcano in the frigate's hold. While we were yet sliding in uproarious crowds—all seated—the windows of the deck opened, and floods of brine descended, simultaneously with a violent lee-roll. The shower was hailed by the reckless tars with a hurricane of yells ; although, for an instant, I really imagined we were about being swamped in the sea, such volumes of water came cascading down.

A day or two after, we had made sufficient easting to stand to the northward, which we did, with the wind astern ; thus fairly turning the corner without abating our rate of progress. Though we had seen no land since leaving Calloa, Cape Horn was said to be some-

where to the West of us; and though there was no positive evidence of the fact, the weather encountered might be accounted pretty good presumptive proof.

The land near Cape Horn, however, is well worth seeing, especially Staten Land. Upon one occasion, the ship in which I then happened to be sailing drew near this place from the northward, with a fair, free wind, blowing steadily, through a bright translucent day, whose air was almost musical with the clear, glittering cold. On our starboard beam, like a pile of glaciers in Switzerland, lay this Staten Land, gleaming in snow-white barrenness and solitude. Unnumbered white albatross were skimming the sea near by, and clouds of smaller white wings fell through the air like snow-flakes. High, towering in their own turbaned snows, the far inland pinnacles loomed up, like the border of some other world. Flashing walls and crystal battlements, like the diamond watch-towers along heaven's furthest frontier.

After leaving the latitude of the Cape, we had several storms of snow; one night a considerable quantity laid upon the decks, and some of the sailors enjoyed the juvenile diversion of snow-balling. Woe unto the "middy" who that night went forward of the booms. Such a target for snow-balls! The throwers could never be known. By some curious sleight in hurling the missiles, they seemed to be thrown on

board by some hoydenish sea-nymphs outside the frigate.

At daybreak Midshipman Pert went below to the surgeon with an alarming wound, gallantly received in discharging his perilous duty on the forecastle. The officer of the deck had sent him on an errand, to tell the boatswain that he was wanted in the captain's cabin. While in the very act of performing the exploit of delivering the message, Mr. Pert was struck on the nose with a snow-ball of wondrous compactness. Upon being informed of the disaster, the rogues expressed the liveliest sympathy. Pert was no favourite.

After one of these storms, it was a curious sight to see the men relieving the uppermost deck of its load of snow. It became the duty of the captain of each gun to keep his own station clean ; accordingly, with an old broom, or "squilgee," he proceeded to business, often quarrelling with his next-door neighbours about scraping their snow on his premises. It was like Broadway in winter, the morning after a storm, when rival shop-boys are at work cleaning the side-walk.

Now and then, by way of variety, we had a fall of hail-stones, so big that sometimes we found ourselves dodging them.

The Commodore had a Polynesian servant on board, whose services he had engaged at the Society Islands. Unlike his countrymen, Wooloo was of a sedate, earnest, and philosophic temperament. Having never been out-

side of the tropics before, he found many phenomena off Cape Horn, which absorbed his attention, and set him, like other philosophers, to feign theories corresponding to the marvels he beheld. At the first snow, when he saw the deck covered all over with a white powder, as it were, he expanded his eyes into stew-pans; but upon examining the strange substance, he decided that this must be a species of superfine flour, such as was compounded into his master's "*duffs*," and other dainties. In vain did an experienced natural philosopher belonging to the fore-top maintain before his face, that in this hypothesis Wooloo was mistaken; Wooloo's opinion remained unchanged for some time.

As for the hailstones, they transported him; he went about with a bucket, making collections, and receiving contributions, for the purpose of carrying them home to his sweethearts for glass beads; but having put his bucket away, and returning to it again, and finding nothing but a little water, he accused the by-standers of stealing his precious stones.

This suggests another story concerning him. The first time he was given a piece of "*duff*" to eat, he was observed to pick out very carefully every raisin, and throw it away, with a gesture indicative of the highest disgust. It turned out that he had taken the raisins for bugs.

In our man-of-war, this semi-savage, wandering about the gun-deck in his barbaric robe, seemed a being from

some other sphere. His tastes were our abominations : ours his. Our creed he rejected : his we. We thought him a loon : he fancied us fools. Had the case been reversed ; had we been Polynesians and he an American, our mutual opinion of each other would still have remained the same. A fact proving that neither was wrong, but both right.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE NIGHT-WATCHES.

THOUGH leaving the Cape behind us, the severe cold still continued, and one of its worst consequences was the almost incurable drowsiness induced thereby during the long night-watches. All along the decks, huddled between the guns, stretched out on the carronade slides, and in every accessible nook and corner, you would see the sailors wrapped in their monkey jackets, in a state of half-conscious torpidity, lying still and freezing alive, without the power to rise and shake themselves.

“Up—up, you lazy dogs!” our good-natured Third Lieutenant, a Virginian, would cry, rapping them with his speaking trumpet. “Get up, and stir about.”

But in vain. They would rise for an instant, and as soon as his back was turned, down they would drop, as if shot through the heart.

Often have I lain thus, when the fact, that if I laid much longer I would actually freeze to death, would come over me with such overpowering force as to break the icy spell, and starting to my feet, I would endeavour to go through the combined manual and pedal exercise to restore the circulation. The first fling of my benumbed arm generally struck me in the face,

instead of smiting my chest, its true destination. But in these cases one's muscles have their own way.

In exercising my other extremities, I was obliged to hold on to something, and leap with both feet ; for my limbs seemed as destitute of joints as a pair of canvass pants spread to dry, and frozen stiff.

When an order was given to haul the braces—which required the strength of the entire watch, some two hundred men—a spectator would have supposed that all hands had received a stroke of the palsy. Roused from their state of enchantment, they came halting and limping across the decks, falling against each other, and, for a few moments, almost unable to handle the ropes. The slightest exertion seemed intolerable ; and frequently a body of eighty or a hundred men, summoned to brace the main-yard, would hang over the rope for several minutes, waiting for some active fellow to pick it up and put it into their hands. Even then, it was some time before they were able to do anything. They made all the motions usual in hauling a rope, but it was a long time before the yard budged an inch. It was to no purpose that the officers swore at them, or sent the midshipmen among them to find out who those “ *horse-marines* ” and “ *sogers* ” were. The sailors were so enveloped in monkey jackets, that in the dark night there was no telling one from the other.

“ Here, *you*, sir ! ” cries little Mr. Pert, eagerly catching hold of the skirts of an old sea-dog, and

trying to turn him round, so as to peer under his tarpaulin. "Who are *you*, sir? What's your name?"

"Find out, Milk-and-Water," was the impertinent rejoinder.

"Blast you! you old rascal; I'll have you licked for that! Tell me his name, some of you!" turning round to the bystanders.

"Gammon!" cries a voice at a distance.

"Hang me, but I know *you*, Sir! and here's at you!" so saying, Mr. Pert drops the impenetrable unknown, and makes into the crowd after the bodiless voice. But the attempt to find an owner for that voice is quite as idle as the effort to discover the contents of the monkey jacket.

And here sorrowful mention must be made of something which, during this state of affairs, most sorely afflicted me. Most monkey jackets are of a dark hue; mine, as I have fifty times repeated, and say again, was white. And thus, in those long, dark nights, when it was my quarter-watch on deck, and not in the top, and others went skulking and "sogering" about the decks, secure from detection—their identity undiscoverable—my own hapless jacket for ever proclaimed the name of its wearer. It gave me many a hard job, which otherwise I should have escaped. When an officer wanted a man for any particular duty—running aloft, say, to communicate some slight order to the captains of the tops—how easy, in that mob of incognitoes, to

individualize "*that white jacket*," and despatch him on the errand! Then, it would never do for me to hang back when the ropes were being pulled.

Indeed, upon all these occasions, such alacrity and cheerfulness was I obliged to display, that I was frequently held up as an illustrious example of activity, which the rest were called upon to emulate. "Pull—pull! you lazy lubbers! Look at White-Jacket there; pull like him!"

Oh! how I execrated my luckless garment! how often I scoured the deck with it, to give it a tawny hue! how often I supplicated the inexorable Brush, captain of the paint-room, for just one brushful of his invaluable pigment! Frequently I meditated giving it a toss overboard; but I had not the resolution. Jacketless at sea! Jacketless so near Cape Horn! The thought was unendurable. And, at least, my garment was a jacket in name, if not in utility.

At length I essayed a "swap." "Here, Bob," said I, assuming all possible suavity, and accosting a mess-mate with a sort of diplomatic assumption of superiority, "suppose I was ready to part with this 'grego' of mine, and take yours in exchange—what would you give me to boot?"

"Give you to *boot*?" he exclaimed, with horror; "I wouldn't take your infernal jacket for a gift!"

How I hailed every snow-squall; for then—blessings on them!—many of the men became *white jackets* along

with myself; and, powdered with the flakes, we all looked like millers.

We had six lieutenants, all of whom, with the exception of the First Lieutenant, by turns headed the watches. Three of these officers, including Mad Jack, were strict disciplinarians, and never permitted us to lay down on deck during the night. And, to tell the truth, though it caused much growling, it was far better for our health to be thus kept on our feet. So promenading was all the vogue. For some of us, however, it was like pacing in a dungeon; for, as we had to keep at our stations—some at the halyards, some at the braces, and elsewhere—and were not allowed to stroll about indefinitely, and fairly take the measure of the ship's entire keel, we were fain to confine ourselves to the space of a very few feet. But the worst of this was soon over. The suddenness of the change in the temperature consequent on leaving Cape Horn, and steering to the northward with a ten-knot breeze, is a noteworthy thing. To-day, you are assailed by a blast that seems to have edged itself on icebergs; but in little more than a week, your jacket may be superfluous.

One word more about Cape Horn, and we have done with it.

Years hence, when a ship canal shall have penetrated the Isthmus of Darien, and the traveller be taking his seat in the cars at Cape Cod for Astoria, it will be held a thing almost incredible that, for so long a period,

vessels bound to the Nor'-west Coast from New York should, by going round Cape Horn, have lengthened their voyages some thousands of miles. "In those unenlightened days" (I quote, in advance, the language of some future philosopher), "entire years were frequently consumed in making the voyage to and from the Spice Islands, the present fashionable watering-place of the beau-monde of Oregon." Such must be our national progress.

Why, Sir, that boy of yours will, one of these days, be sending your grandson to the salubrious city of Jeddo to spend his summer vacations.

CHAPTER XXX.

A PEEP THROUGH A PORT-HOLE AT THE SUBTERRANEAN PARTS OF A
MAN-OF-WAR.

WHILE now running rapidly away from the bitter coast of Patagonia, battling with the night-watches—still cold—as best we may ; come under the lee of my white jacket, reader, while I tell of some of the sights to be seen in a frigate.

A hint has already been conveyed concerning the subterranean depths of the Neversink's hold. But there is no time here to speak of the *spirit-room*, a cellar down in the after-hold, where the sailors' "grog" is kept ; nor of the *cable-tiers*, where the great hawsers and chains are piled, as you see them at a large ship-chandler's on shore ; nor of the grocer's vaults, where tierces of sugar, molasses, vinegar, rice, and flour are snugly stowed ; nor of the *sail-room*, full as a sail-maker's loft ashore—piled up with great top-sails and top-gallant-sails, all ready-folded in their places, like so many white vests in a gentleman's wardrobe ; nor of the copper and copper-fastened *magazine*, closely packed with kegs of powder, great-gun and small-arm

cartridges; nor of the immense *shot-lockers*, or subterranean arsenals, full as a bushel of apples with twenty-four-pound balls; nor of the *bread-room*, a large apartment, tinned all round within, to keep out the mice, where the hard biscuit destined for the consumption of five hundred men on a long voyage is stowed away by the cubic yard; nor of the vast iron *tanks* for fresh water in the hold, like the reservoir lakes at Fairmount, in Philadelphia; nor of the *paint-room*, where the kegs of white-lead, and casks of linseed oil, and all sorts of pots and brushes, are kept; nor of the *armourer's smithy*, where the ship's forges and anvils may be heard ringing at times; I say, I have no time to speak of these things, and many more places of note.

But there is one very extensive warehouse among the rest that needs special mention—the *ship's Yeoman's store-room*. In the Neversink it was down in the ship's basement, beneath the berth-deck, and you went to it by way of the *Fore-passage*, a very dim, devious corridor, indeed. Entering—say at noonday—you find yourself in a gloomy apartment, lit by a solitary lamp. On one side are shelves, filled with balls of *marline*, *ratlin-stuff*, *seizing-stuff*, *spun-yarn*, and numerous twines of assorted sizes. In another direction you see large cases containing heaps of articles, reminding one of a shoemaker's furnishing-store—wooden *serving-mallets*, *fids*, *toggles*, and *heavers*; iron *prickers* and *marling-spikes*; in a third quarter you see a sort of hardware shop—shelves

piled with all manner of hooks, bolts, nails, screws, and *thimbles*; and in still another direction, you see a block-maker's store, heaped up with *lignum-vitæ* sheaves and wheels.

Through low arches in the bulk-head beyond, you peep in upon distant vaults and catacombs, obscurely lighted in the far end, and showing immense coils of new ropes, and other bulky articles, stowed in tiers, all savouring of tar.

But by far the most curious department of these mysterious store-rooms is the armoury, where the pikes, cutlasses, pistols, and belts, forming the arms of the boarders in time of action, are hung against the walls, and suspended in thick rows from the beams overhead. Here, too, are to be seen scores of Colt's patent revolvers, which, though furnished with but one tube, multiply the fatal bullets, as the naval cat-o'-nine-tails, with a cannibal cruelty, in one blow nine times multiplies a culprit's lashes; so that, when a sailor is ordered one dozen lashes, the sentence should read one hundred and eight. All these arms are kept in the brightest order, wearing a fine polish, and may truly be said to *reflect* credit on the Yeoman and his mates.

Among the lower grade of officers in a man-of-war, that of Yeoman is not the least important. His responsibilities are denoted by his pay. While the *petty officers*, quarter-gunners, captains of the tops, and others, receive but fifteen and eighteen dollars a month

— but little more than a mere able seaman — the Yeoman in an American line-of-battle ship receives forty dollars, and in a frigate thirty-five dollars per month.

He is accountable for all the articles under his charge, and on no account must deliver a yard of twine or a tenpenny nail to the boatswain or carpenter, unless shown a written requisition and order from the Senior Lieutenant. The Yeoman is to be found burrowing in his under-ground store-rooms all the day long, in readiness to serve licensed customers. But in the counter, behind which he usually stands, there is no place for a till to drop the shillings in, which takes away not a little from the most agreeable part of a storekeeper's duties. Nor, among the musty, old account-books in his desk, where he registers all expenditures of his stuffs, is there any cash or check book.

The Yeoman of the *Neversink* was a somewhat odd specimen of a Troglodite. He was a little old man, round-shouldered, bald-headed, with great goggle-eyes, looking through portentous round spectacles, which he called his *barnacles*. He was imbued with a wonderful zeal for the naval service, and seemed to think that, in keeping his pistols and cutlasses free from rust, he preserved the national honour untarnished.

After *general quarters*, it was amusing to watch his anxious air as the various *petty officers* restored to him the arms used at the martial exercises of the crew.

As successive bundles would be deposited on his counter, he would count over the pistols and cutlasses, like an old housekeeper telling over her silver forks and spoons in a pantry before retiring for the night. And often, with a sort of dark lantern in his hand, he might be seen poking into his furthest vaults and cellars, and counting over his great coils of ropes, as if they were all jolly puncheons of old Port and Madeira.

By reason of his incessant watchfulness and unaccountable bachelor oddities, it was very difficult for him to retain in his employment the various sailors who, from time to time, were billeted with him to do the duty of subalterns. In particular, he was always desirous of having at least one steady, faultless young man, of a literary taste, to keep an eye to his account-books, and swab out the armoury every morning. It was an odious business this, to be immured all day in such a bottomless hole, among tarry old ropes and villanous guns and pistols. It was with peculiar dread that I one day noticed the goggle-eyes of *Old Revolver*, as they called him, fastened upon me with a fatal glance of good-will and approbation. He had somehow heard of my being a very learned person, who could both read and write with extraordinary facility; and, moreover, that I was a rather reserved youth, who kept his modest, unassuming merits in the background. But though, from the keen sense of my situation as a man-of-war's-man, all this about my keeping myself in the

back ground was true enough, yet I had no idea of hiding my diffident merits *under* ground. I became alarmed at the old Yeoman's goggling glances, lest he should drag me down into tarry perdition in his hideous store-rooms. But this fate was providentially averted, owing to mysterious causes which I never could fathom.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE GUNNER UNDER HATCHES.

AMONG such a crowd of marked characters as were to be met with on board our frigate, many of whom moved in mysterious circles beneath the lowermost deck, and at long intervals flitted into sight like apparitions, and disappeared again for whole weeks together, there were some who inordinately excited my curiosity, and whose names, callings, and precise abodes I industriously sought out, in order to learn something satisfactory concerning them.

While engaged in these inquiries, often fruitless, or but partially gratified, I could not but regret that there was no public printed Directory for the Neversink, such as they have in large towns, containing an alphabetic list of all the crew, and where they might be found. Also, in losing myself in some remote, dark corner of the bowels of the frigate, in the vicinity of the various store-rooms, shops, and warehouses, I much lamented that no enterprising tar had yet thought of compiling a *Hand-book of the Neversink*, so that the tourist might have a reliable guide.

Indeed, there were several parts of the ship under hatches shrouded in mystery, and completely inacces-

sible to the sailor. Wondrous old doors, barred and bolted in dingy bulk-heads, must have opened into regions full of interest to a successful explorer.

They looked like the gloomy entrances to family vaults of buried dead ; and when I chanced to see some unknown functionary insert his key, and enter these inexplicable apartments with a battle-lantern, as if on solemn official business, I almost quaked to dive in with him, and satisfy myself whether these vaults indeed contained the mouldering relics of by-gone old Commodores and Post-captains. But the habitations of the living Commodore and Captain—their spacious and curtained cabins—were themselves almost as sealed volumes, and I passed them in hopeless wonderment, like a peasant before a prince's palace. Night and day armed sentries guarded their sacred portals, cutlass in hand ; and had I dared to cross their path, I would infallibly have been cut down, as if in battle. Thus, though for a period of more than a year I was an inmate of this floating box of live-oak, yet there were numberless things in it that, to the last, remained wrapped in obscurity, or concerning which I could only lose myself in vague speculations. I was as a Roman Jew of the Middle Ages, confined to the Jews' quarter of the town, and forbidden to stray beyond my limits. Or I was as a modern traveller in the same famous city, forced to quit it at last without gaining ingress to the most mysterious haunts—the innermost shrine of the

Pope, and the dungeons and cells of the Inquisition.

But among all the persons and things on board that puzzled me, and filled me most with strange emotions of doubt, misgivings, and mystery, was the Gunner, —a short, square, grim man, his hair and beard grizzled and singed, as if with gunpowder. His skin was of a flecky brown, like the stained barrel of a fowling-piece, and his hollow eyes burned in his head like blue-lights. He it was who had access to many of those mysterious vaults I have spoken of. Often he might be seen groping his way into them, followed by his subalterns, the old quarter-gunners, as if intent upon laying a train of powder to blow up the ship. I remembered Guy Fawkes and the Parliament-house, and made earnest inquiry whether this gunner was a Roman Catholic. I felt relieved when informed that he was not.

A little circumstance which one of his *mates* once told me heightened the gloomy interest with which I regarded his chief. He told me that, at periodical intervals, his master the Gunner, accompanied by his phalanx, entered into the great Magazine under the Gun-room, of which he had sole custody, and kept the key, nearly as big as the key of the Bastile, and provided with lanterns, something like Sir Humphrey Davy's Safety-lamp for coal mines, proceeded to turn, end for end, all the kegs of powder, and packages of cartridges stored in this innermost explosive vault, lined

throughout with sheets of copper. In the vestibule of the Magazine, against the panelling, were several pegs for slippers, and, before penetrating further than that vestibule, every man of the gunner's-gang silently removed his shoes, for fear that the nails in their heels might possibly create a spark, by striking against the coppered floor within. Then, with slippered feet, and with hushed whispers, they stole into the heart of the place.

. This turning of the powder was to preserve its inflammability. And surely it was a business full of direful interest, to be buried so deep below the sun, handling whole barrels of powder, any one of which, touched by the smallest spark, was powerful enough to blow up a whole street of warehouses.

The gunner went by the name of *Old Combustibles*, though I thought this an undignified name for so momentous a personage, who had all our lives in his hand.

While we lay in Callao, we received from shore several barrels of powder. So soon as the *launch* came alongside with them, orders were given to extinguish all lights and all fires in the ship; and the master-at-arms and his corporals inspected every deck, to see that this order was obeyed; a very prudent precaution, no doubt, but not observed at all in the Turkish navy. The Turkish sailors will sit on their gun-carriages tranquilly smoking, while kegs of powder are being rolled

under their ignited pipe-bowls. This shows the great comfort there is in the doctrine of these Fatalists, and how such a doctrine, in some things at least, relieves men from nervous anxieties. But we are all Fatalists at bottom. Nor need we so much marvel at the heroism of that army officer, who challenged his personal foe to bestride a barrel of powder with him—the match to be placed between them—and be blown up in good company, for it is pretty certain that the whole earth itself is a vast hogshead, full of inflammable materials, and which we are always bestriding; at the same time, that all good Christians believe that at any minute the last day may come, and the terrible combustion of the entire planet ensue.

As if impressed with a befitting sense of the awfulness of his calling, our gunner always wore a fixed expression of solemnity, which was heightened by his grizzled hair and beard. But what imparted such a sinister look to him, and what wrought so upon my imagination concerning this man, was a frightful scar crossing his left cheek and forehead. He had been almost mortally wounded, they said, with a sabre-cut, during a frigate engagement in the last war with Britain.

He was the most methodical, exact, and punctual of all the forward officers. Among his other duties, it pertained to him, while in harbour, to see that at a certain hour in the evening one of the great guns was

discharged from the fore-castle, a ceremony only observed in a flag-ship. And always at the precise moment you might behold him blowing his match, then applying it ; and with that booming thunder in his ear, and the smell of the powder in his hair, he retired to his hammock for the night. What dreams he must have had !

The same precision was observed when ordered to fire a gun to *bring to* some ship at sea ; for, true to their name, and preserving its applicability, even in times of peace, all men-of-war are great bullies on the high seas. They domineer over the poor merchantmen, and with a hissing hot ball sent bowling across the ocean, compel them to stop their headway at pleasure.

It was enough to make you a man of method for life, to see the gunner superintending his subalterns, when preparing the main-deck batteries for a great national salute. While lying in harbour, intelligence reached us of the lamentable casualty that befell certain high officers of state, including the acting Secretary of the Navy himself, some other member of the President's cabinet, a Commodore, and others, all engaged in experimenting upon a new-fangled engine of war. At the same time with the receipt of this sad news, orders arrived to fire minute-guns for the deceased head of the naval department. Upon this occasion the gunner was more than usually ceremonious, in seeing that the long twenty-fours were thoroughly loaded and rammed down,

and then accurately marked with chalk, so as to be discharged in undeviating rotation, first from the larboard side, and then from the starboard.

But as my ears hummed, and all my bones danced in me with the reverberating din, and my eyes and nostrils were almost suffocated with the smoke, and when I saw this grim old gunner firing away so solemnly, I thought it a strange mode of honouring a man's memory who had himself been slaughtered by a cannon. Only the smoke, that, after rolling in at the port-holes, rapidly drifted away to leeward, and was lost to view, seemed truly emblematical touching the personage thus honoured, since that great non-combatant, the Bible, assures us that our life is but a vapour, that quickly passeth away.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A DISH OF DUNDERFUNK.

IN men-of-war, the space on the uppermost deck, round about the main-mast, is the Police-office, Court-house, and yard of execution, where all charges are lodged, causes tried, and punishment administered. In frigate phrase, to be *brought up to the mast*, is equivalent to being presented before the grand-jury, to see whether a true bill will be found against you.

From the merciless, inquisitorial *baiting* which sailors, charged with offences, too often experience *at the mast*, that vicinity is usually known among them as the *bull-ring*.

The main-mast, moreover, is the only place where the sailor can hold formal communication with the captain and officers. If any one has been robbed; if any one has been evilly entreated; if any one's character has been defamed; if any one has a request to present; if any one has aught important for the executive of the ship to know—straight to the main-mast he repairs; and stands there—generally with his hat off—waiting the pleasure of the officer of the deck to advance and communicate with him. Often, the most ludicrous scenes occur, and the most comical complaints are made.

One clear, cold morning, while we were yet running away from the Cape, a raw-boned, crack-pated Down Easter, belonging to the Waist, made his appearance at the mast, dolefully exhibiting a blackened tin pan, bearing a few crusty traces of some sort of a sea-pie, which had been cooked in it.

"Well, sir, what now?" said the Lieutenant of the Deck, advancing.

"They stole it, sir; all my nice *dunderfunk*, sir; they did, sir," whined the Down Easter, ruefully holding up his pan.

"Stole your *dundlefunk*! what's that?"

"*Dunderfunk*, sir, *dunderfunk*; a cruel nice dish as ever man put into him."

"Speak out, sir; what's the matter?"

"My *dunderfunk*, sir—as elegant a dish of *dunderfunk* as you ever see, sir—they stole it, sir!"

"Go forward, you rascal!" cried the Lieutenant, in a towering rage, "or else stop your whining. Tell me, what's the matter?"

"Why, sir, them 'ere two fellows, Dobs and Hodnose, stole my *dunderfunk*."

"Once more, sir, I ask what that *dundledunk* is? Speak!"

"As cruel a nice—"

"Be off, sir! sheer!" and muttering something about *non compos mentis*, the Lieutenant stalked away; while the Down Easter beat a melancholy retreat,

holding up his pan like a tambourine, and making dolorous music on it as he went.

"Where are you going with that tear in your eye, like a travelling rat?" cried a top-man.

"Oh! he's going home to Down East," said another; "so far eastward, you know, *shippy*, that they have to pry up the sun with a handspike."

To make this anecdote plainer, be it said that, at sea, the monotonous round of salt beef and pork at the messes of the sailors—where but very few of the varieties of the season are to be found—induces them to adopt many contrivances in order to diversify their meals. Hence the various sea-rolls, made dishes, and Mediterranean pies, well known by man-of-war's-men—*Scouse*, *Lob-scouse*, *Soft-Tack*, *Soft-Tommy*, *Skillagalee*, *Burgoo*, *Dough-boys*, *Lob-Dominion*, *Dog's-Body*, and lastly, and least known, *Dunderfunk*; all of which come under the general denomination of *Manavalins*.

Dunderfunk is made of hard biscuit, hashed and pounded, mixed with beef fat, molasses, and water, and baked brown in a pan. And to those who are beyond all reach of shore delicacies, this *dunderfunk*, in the feeling language of the Down Easter, is certainly "*a cruel nice dish*."

Now the only way that a sailor, after preparing his *dunderfunk*, could get it cooked on board the *Never-sink*, was by sily going to *Old Coffee*, the ship's cook, and bribing him to put it into his oven. And as some

such dishes or other are well known to be all the time in the oven, a set of unprincipled gourmands are constantly on the look-out for the chance of stealing them. Generally, two or three league together, and while one engages *Old Coffee* in some interesting conversation touching his wife and family at home, another snatches the first thing he can lay hands on in the oven, and rapidly passes it to the third man, who at his earliest leisure disappears with it.

In this manner had the Down Easter lost his precious pie, and afterward found the empty pan knocking about the forecastle.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A FLOGGING.

IF you begin the day with a laugh, you may, nevertheless, end it with a sob and a sigh.

Among the many who were exceedingly diverted with the scene between the Down Easter and the Lieutenant, none laughed more heartily than John, Peter, Mark, and Antone—four sailors of the starboard-watch. The same evening these four found themselves prisoners in the “brig,” with a sentry standing over them. They were charged with violating a well-known law of the ship—having been engaged in one of those tangled, general fights sometimes occurring among sailors. They had nothing to anticipate but a flogging, at the Captain’s pleasure.

Toward evening of the next day, they were startled by the dread summons of the boatswain and his mates at the principal hatchway—a summons that ever sends a shudder through every manly heart in a frigate :

“ All hands witness punishment, ahoy ! ”

The hoarseness of the cry, its unrelenting prolongation, its being caught up at different points, and sent through the lowermost depths of the ship ; all this pro-

duces a most dismal effect upon every heart not caloused by long habituation to it.

However much you may desire to absent yourself from the scene that ensues, yet behold it you must; or, at least, stand near it you must; for the regulations enjoin the attendance of almost the entire ship's company, from the corpulent Captain himself to the smallest boy who strikes the bell.

"All hands witness punishment, ahoy!"

To the sensitive seaman that summons sounds like a doom. He knows that the same law which impels it—the same law by which the culprits of the day must suffer; that by that very law he also is liable at any time to be judged and condemned. And the inevitableness of his own presence at the scene; the strong arm that drags him in view of the scourge, and holds him there till all is over; forcing upon his loathing eye and soul the sufferings and groans of men who have familiarly consorted with him, eaten with him, battled out watches with him—men of his own type and badge—all this conveys a terrible hint of the omnipotent authority under which he lives. Indeed, to such a man the naval summons to witness punishment carries a thrill, somewhat akin to what we may impute to the quick and the dead, when they shall hear the Last Trump, that is to bid them all arise in their ranks, and behold the final penalties inflicted upon the sinners of our race.

But it must not be imagined that to all man-of-war's-men this summons conveys such poignant emotions; but it is hard to decide whether one should be glad or sad that this is not the case! whether it is grateful to know that so much pain is avoided, or whether it is far sadder to think that, either from constitutional hard-heartedness or the multiplied searings of habit, hundreds of man-of-war's-men have been made proof against the sense of degradation, pity, and shame.

As if in sympathy with the scene to be enacted, the sun, which the day previous had merrily flashed upon the tin pan of the disconsolate Down Easter, was now setting over the dreary waters, veiling itself in vapours. The wind blew hoarsely in the cordage; the seas broke heavily against the bows; and the frigate, staggering under whole top-sails, strained as if scourged on her way.

"All hands witness punishment, ahoy!"

At the summons the crew crowded round the main-mast; multitudes eager to obtain a good place on the booms, to overlook the scene; many laughing and chatting, others canvassing the case of the culprits; some maintaining sad, anxious countenances, or carrying a suppressed indignation in their eyes; a few purposely keeping behind to avoid looking on; in short, among five hundred men there was every possible shade of character.

All the officers—midshipmen included—stood together in a group on the starboard side of the main-mast; the First Lieutenant in advance, and the surgeon, whose special duty it is to be present at such times, standing close by his side.

Presently the Captain came forward from his cabin, and stood in the centre of this solemn group, with a small paper in his hand. That paper was the daily report of offences, regularly laid upon his table every morning or evening, like the day's journal placed by a bachelor's napkin at breakfast.

"Master-at-arms, bring up the prisoners," he said.

A few moments elapsed, during which the Captain, now clothed in his most dreadful attributes, fixed his eyes severely upon the crew, when suddenly a lane formed through the crowd of seamen, and the prisoners advanced—the master-at-arms, rattan in hand, on one side, and an armed marine on the other—and took up their stations at the mast.

"You John, you Peter, you Mark, you Antone," said the Captain, "were yesterday found fighting on the gun-deck. Have you anything to say?"

Mark and Antone, two steady, middle-aged men, whom I had often admired for their sobriety, replied that they did not strike the first blow; that they had submitted to much before they had yielded to their passions; but as they acknowledged that they had at last defended themselves, their excuse was overruled.

John—a brutal bully, who, it seems, was the real author of the disturbance—was about entering into a long extenuation, when he was cut short by being made to confess, irrespective of circumstances, that he had been in the fray.

Peter, a handsome lad about nineteen years old, belonging to the mizzen-top, looked pale and tremulous. He was a great favourite in his part of the ship, and especially in his own mess, principally composed of lads of his own age. That morning two of his young mess-mates had gone to his bag, taken out his best clothes, and, obtaining the permission of the marine sentry at the “brig,” had handed them to him, to be put on against being summoned to the mast. This was done to propitiate the Captain, as most captains love to see a tidy sailor. But it would not do. To all his supplications the Captain turned a deaf ear. Peter declared that he had been struck twice before he had returned a blow. “No matter,” said the Captain, “you struck at last, instead of reporting the case to an officer. I allow no man to fight on board here but myself. *I* do the fighting.”

“Now, men,” he added, “you all admit the charge; you know the penalty. Strip! Quarter-masters, are the gratings rigged?”

The gratings are square frames of barred wood-work, sometimes placed over the hatch-ways. One of these squares was now laid on the deck, close to the ship’s

bulwarks, and while the remaining preparations were being made, the master-at-arms assisted the prisoners in removing their jackets and shirts. This done, their shirts were loosely thrown over their shoulders.

At a sign from the Captain, John, with a shameless leer, advanced, and stood passively upon the grating, while the bare-headed old quarter-master, with gray hair streaming in the wind, bound his feet to the cross-bars, and, stretching out his arms over his head, secured them to the hammock-nettings above. He then retreated a little space, standing silent.

Meanwhile, the boatswain stood solemnly on the other side, with a green bag in his hand, from which taking four instruments of punishment, he gave one to each of his mates; for a fresh "cat," applied by a fresh hand, is the ceremonious privilege accorded to every man-of-war culprit.

At another sign from the Captain, the master-at-arms, stepping up, removed the shirt from the prisoner. At this juncture a wave broke against the ship's side, and dashed the spray over his exposed back. But though the air was piercing cold, and the water drenched him, John stood still, without a shudder.

The Captain's finger was now lifted, and the first boatswain's-mate advanced, combing out the nine tails of his *cat* with his hand, and then, sweeping them round his neck, brought them with the whole force of his body upon the mark. Again, and again, and

again ; and at every blow, higher and higher rose the long, purple bars on the prisoner's back. But he only bowed over his head, and stood still. Meantime, some of the crew whispered among themselves in applause of their shipmate's nerve ; but the greater part were breathlessly silent as the keen scourge hissed through the wintry air, and fell with a cutting, wiry sound upon the mark. One dozen lashes being applied, the man was taken down, and went among the crew with a smile, saying, "D—n me ! it's nothing when you're used to it ! Who wants to fight?"

The next was Antone, the Portuguese. At every blow he surged from side to side, pouring out a torrent of involuntary blasphemies. Never before had he been heard to curse. When cut down, he went among the men, swearing to have the life of the Captain. Of course, this was unheard by the officers.

Mark, the third prisoner, only cringed and coughed under his punishment. He had some pulmonary complaint. He was off duty for several days after the flogging ; but this was partly to be imputed to his extreme mental misery. It was his first scourging, and he felt the insult more than the injury. He became silent and sullen for the rest of the cruise.

The fourth and last was Peter, the mizzen-top lad. He had often boasted that he had never been degraded at the gang-way. The day before his cheek had worn its usual red, but now no ghost was whiter. As he was

being secured to the gratings, and the shudderings and creepings of his dazzlingly white back were revealed, he turned round his head imploringly; but his weeping entreaties and vows of contrition were of no avail. "I would not forgive God Almighty!" cried the Captain. The fourth boatswain's-mate advanced, and at the first blow, the boy, shouting, "*My God! Oh! my God!*" writhed and leaped so as to displace the gratings, and scatter the nine tails of the scourge all over his person. At the next blow he howled, leaped, and raged in unendurable torture.

"What are you stopping for, boatswain's-mate?" cried the Captain. "Lay on!" and the whole dozen was applied.

"I don't care what happens to me now!" wept Peter, going among the crew, with blood-shot eyes, as he put on his shirt. "I have been flogged once, and they may do it again if they will. Let them look out for me now!"

"Pipe down!" cried the Captain; and the crew slowly dispersed.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SOME OF THE EVIL EFFECTS OF FLOGGING.

THERE are incidental considerations touching this matter of flogging, which exaggerate the evil into a great enormity. Many illustrations might be given, but let us be content with a few.

One of the arguments advanced by officers of the Navy in favour of corporal punishment is this: it can be inflicted in a moment; it consumes no valuable time; and when the prisoner's shirt is put on, *that* is the last of it. Whereas, if another punishment were substituted, it would probably occasion a great waste of time and trouble, besides thereby begetting in the sailor an undue idea of his importance.

Absurd, or worse than absurd, as it may appear, all this is true; and if you start from the same premises with these officers, you must admit that they advance an irresistible argument. But in accordance with this principle, captains in the Navy, to a certain extent, inflict the scourge—which is ever at hand—for nearly all degrees of transgression. In offences not cognizable by a court martial, little if any discrimination is shown. It is of a piece with the penal laws that prevailed in

England some sixty years ago, when one hundred and sixty different offences were declared by the statute-book to be capital, and the servant-maid who but pilfered a watch was hung beside the murderer of a family.

It is one of the most common punishments for very trivial offences in the Navy, to "stop" a seaman's *grog* for a day or a week. And as most seamen so cling to their *grog*, the loss of it is generally deemed by them a very serious penalty. You will sometimes hear them say, "I would rather have my wind *stopped* than my *grog*!"

But there are some sober seamen that would much rather draw the money for it, instead of the *grog* itself, as provided by law; but they are too often deterred from this by the thought of receiving a scourging for some inconsiderable offence, as a substitute for the stopping of their spirits. This is a most serious obstacle to the cause of temperance in the Navy. But, in many cases, even the reluctant drawing of his *grog* cannot exempt a prudent seaman from ignominy; for besides the formal administering of the "*cat*" at the gangway for petty offences, he is liable to the "*colt*," or rope's-end, a bit of *ratlin-stuff*, indiscriminately applied—without stripping the victim—at any time, and in any part of the ship, at the merest wink from the Captain. By an express order of that officer, most boatswain's mates carry the "*colt*" coiled in their hats,

in readiness to be administered at a minute's warning upon any offender. This was the custom in the *Never-sink*. And until so recent a period as the administration of President Polk, when the historian Bancroft, Secretary of the Navy, officially interposed, it was an almost universal thing for the officers of the watch, at their own discretion, to inflict chastisement upon a sailor, and this, too, in the face of the ordinance restricting the power of flogging solely to Captains and Courts Martial. Nor was it a thing unknown for a Lieutenant, in a sudden outburst of passion, perhaps inflamed by brandy, or smarting under the sense of being disliked or hated by the seamen, to order a whole watch of two hundred and fifty men, at dead of night, to undergo the indignity of the "colt."

It is believed that, even at the present day, there are instances of Commanders still violating the law, by delegating the power of the colt to subordinates. At all events, it is certain that, almost to a man, the Lieutenants in the Navy bitterly rail against the officiousness of Bancroft, in so materially abridging their usurped functions by snatching the colt from their hands. At the time, they predicted that this rash and most ill-judged interference of the Secretary would end in the breaking up of all discipline in the Navy. But it has not so proved. These officers *now* predict that, if the "cat" be abolished, the same unfulfilled prediction would be verified.

Concerning the license with which many Captains violate the express laws laid down by Congress for the government of the Navy, a glaring instance may be quoted. For upwards of forty years there has been on the American Statute-book a law prohibiting a Captain from inflicting, on his own authority, more than twelve lashes at one time, and for one offence. If more are to be given, the sentence must be passed by a Court Martial. Yet, for nearly half a century, this law has been frequently, and with almost perfect impunity, set at nought: though of late, through the exertions of Bancroft and others, it has been much better observed than formerly; indeed, at the present day it is generally respected. Still, while the *Neversink* was lying in a South American port, on the cruise now written of, the seamen belonging to another American frigate informed us that their Captain sometimes inflicted, upon his own authority, eighteen and twenty lashes. It is worth while to state that this frigate was vastly admired by the shore ladies for her wonderfully neat appearance. One of her fore-castle-men told me that he had worn out three jack-knives (charged to him on the books of the purser) in scraping the belaying-pins and the combings of the hatchways.

It is singular that while the Lieutenants of the Watch in American men-of-war so long usurped the power of inflicting corporal punishment with the *colt*, few or no similar abuses were known in the English Navy. And

though the Captain of an English armed ship is authorized to inflict, at his own discretion, *more* than a dozen lashes (I think three dozen), yet it is to be doubted whether, upon the whole, there is as much flogging at present in the English Navy as in the American. The chivalric Virginian, John Randolph of Roanoke, declared, in his place in Congress, that on board of the American man-of-war that carried him out Ambassador to Russia he had witnessed more flogging than had taken place on his own plantation of five hundred African slaves in ten years. Certain it is, from what I have personally seen, that the English officers, as a general thing, seem to be less disliked by their crews than the American officers by theirs. The reason probably is, that many of them, from their station in life, have been more accustomed to social command ; hence, quarter-deck authority sits more naturally on them. A coarse, vulgar man, who happens to rise to high naval rank by the exhibition of talents not incompatible with vulgarity, invariably proves a tyrant to his crew. It is a thing that American man-of-war's-men have often observed, that the Lieutenants from the Southern States, the descendants of the old Virginians, are much less severe, and much more gentle and gentlemanly in command, than the Northern officers, as a class.

According to the present laws and usages of the Navy, a seaman, for the most trivial alleged offences, of which he may be entirely innocent, must, without

a trial, undergo a penalty the traces whereof he carries to the grave ; for to a man-of-war's-man's experienced eye the marks of a naval scourging with the " *cat*" are through life discernible. And with these marks on his back, this image of his Creator must rise at the Last Day. Yet so untouchable is true dignity, that there are cases wherein to be flogged at the gangway is no dishonour ; though, to abase and hurl down the last pride of some sailor who has piqued him, be sometimes the secret motive, with some malicious officer, in procuring him to be condemned to the lash. But this feeling of the innate dignity remaining untouched, though outwardly the body be scarred for the whole term of the natural life, is one of the hushed things, buried among the holiest privacies of the soul ; a thing between a man's God and himself ; and for ever undiscernible by our fellow-men, who account *that* a degradation which seems so to the corporal eye. But what torments must that seaman undergo, who, while his back bleeds at the gangway, bleeds agonized drops of shame from his soul ! Are we not justified in immeasurably denouncing this thing ? Join hands with me, then ; and in the name of that Being, in whose image the flogged sailor is made, let us demand of Legislators, by what right they dare profane what God himself accounts sacred.

Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman ? asks the intrepid Apostle, well knowing, as a Roman citizen, that it was not. And now, eighteen

hundred years after, is it lawful for you, my countrymen, to scourge a man that is an American?—to scourge him round the world in your frigates?

It is to no purpose that you apologetically appeal to the general depravity of the man-of-war's-man. Depravity in the oppressed is no apology for the oppressor; but rather an additional stigma to him, as being, in a large degree, the effect, and not the cause and justification of oppression.

CHAPTER XXXV.

FLOGGING NOT LAWFUL.

BUT it is next to idle, at the present day, merely to denounce an iniquity. Be ours, then, a different task.

If there are any three things opposed to the genius of the American Constitution, they are these: irresponsibility in a judge, unlimited discretionary authority in an executive, and the union of an irresponsible judge and an unlimited executive in one person.

Yet by virtue of an enactment of Congress, all the Commodores in the American Navy are obnoxious to these three charges, so far as concerns the punishment of the sailor for alleged misdemeanours not particularly set forth in the Articles of War.

Here is the enactment in question.

XXXII. *Of the Articles of War.*—"All crimes committed by persons belonging to the Navy, which are not specified in the foregoing articles, shall be punished according to the laws and customs in such cases at sea."

This is the article that, above all others, puts the scourge into the hands of the Captain, calls him to no account for its exercise, and furnishes him with an

ample warrant for inflictions of cruelty upon the common sailor, hardly credible to landsmen.

By this article the Captain is made a legislator, as well as a judge and an executive. So far as it goes, it absolutely leaves to his discretion to decide what things shall be considered crimes, and what shall be the penalty; whether an accused person has been guilty of actions by him declared to be crimes; and how, when, and where the penalty shall be inflicted.

In the American Navy there is an everlasting suspension of the Habeas Corpus. Upon the bare allegation of misconduct, there is no law to restrain the Captain from imprisoning a seaman, and keeping him confined at his pleasure. While I was in the *Neversink*, the Captain of an American sloop-of-war, from undoubted motives of personal pique, kept a seaman confined in the brig for upwards of a month.

Certainly the necessities of navies warrant a code for its government more stringent than the law that governs the land; but that code should conform to the spirit of the political institutions of the country that ordains it. It should not convert into slaves some of the citizens of a nation of freemen. Such objections cannot be urged against the laws of the Russian Navy (not essentially different from our own), because the laws of that Navy, creating the absolute one-man power in the Captain, and vesting in him the authority to scourge, conform in spirit to the territorial laws of Russia, which

is ruled by an autocrat, and whose courts inflict the *knout* upon the subjects of the land. But with us it is different. Our institutions claim to be based upon broad principles of political liberty and equality. Whereas, it would hardly affect one iota the condition on shipboard of an American man-of-war's-man, were he transferred to the Russian Navy and made a subject of the Czar.

As a sailor, he shares none of our civil immunities; the law of our soil in no respect accompanies the national floating timbers grown thereon, and to which he clings as his home. For him our Revolution was in vain; to him our Declaration of Independence is a lie.

It is not sufficiently borne in mind, perhaps, that though the naval code comes under the head of the martial law, yet, in time of peace, and in the thousand questions arising between man and man on board ship, this code, to a certain extent, may not improperly be deemed municipal. With its crew of 800 or 1,000 men, a three-decker is a city on the sea. But in most of these matters between man and man, the Captain, instead of being a magistrate, dispensing what the law promulgates, is an absolute ruler, making and unmaking law as he pleases.

It will be seen that the XXth of the Articles of War provides, that if any person in the Navy negligently perform the duties assigned him, he shall suffer such punishment as a court martial shall adjudge; but if the

offender be a private (common sailor), he may, at the discretion of the Captain, be put in irons or flogged. It is needless to say, that in cases where an officer commits a trivial violation of this law, a court martial is seldom or never called to sit upon his trial; but in the sailor's case, he is at once condemned to the lash. Thus, one set of sea-citizens is exempted from a law that is hung in terror over others. What would landmen think, were the State of New York to pass a law against some offence, affixing a fine as a penalty, and then add to that law a section restricting its penal operation to mechanics and day labourers, exempting all gentlemen with an income of one thousand dollars? Yet thus, in the spirit of its practical operation, even thus, stands a good part of the naval laws wherein naval flogging is involved.

But a law should be "universal," and include in its possible penal operations the very judge himself who gives decisions upon it; nay, the very judge who expounds it. Had Sir William Blackstone violated the laws of England, he would have been brought before the bar over which he had presided, and would there have been tried, with the counsel for the crown reading to him, perhaps, from a copy of his own *Commentaries*. And should he have been found guilty, he would have suffered like the meanest subject, "according to law."

How is it in an American frigate? Let one example suffice. By the Articles of War, and especially by

Article I., an American Captain may, and frequently does, inflict a severe and degrading punishment upon a sailor, while he himself is for ever removed from the possibility of undergoing the like disgrace; and, in all probability, from undergoing any punishment whatever, even if guilty of the same thing—contention with his equals, for instance—for which he punishes another. Yet both sailor and captain are American citizens.

Now, in the language of a great lawyer, there is a law, “coeval with mankind, dictated by God himself, superior in obligation to any other, and no human laws are of any validity if contrary to this.” That law is the Law of Nature; among the three great principles of which Justinian includes “that to every man should be rendered his due.” But we have seen that the laws involving flogging in the Navy do *not* render to every man his due, since in some cases they indirectly exclude the officers from any punishment whatever, and in all cases protect them from the scourge, which is inflicted upon the sailor. Therefore, according to Blackstone and Justinian, those laws have no binding force; and every American man-of-war’s-man would be morally justified in resisting the scourge to the uttermost; and, in so resisting, would be religiously justified in what would be judicially styled “the act of mutiny” itself.

If, then, these scourging laws be for any reason necessary, make them binding upon all who of right come

under their sway ; and let us see an honest Commodore, duly authorized by Congress, condemning to the lash a transgressing Captain by the side of a transgressing sailor. And if the Commodore himself prove a transgressor, let us see one of his brother Commodores take up the lash against *him*, even as the boatswain's mates, the navy executioners, are often called upon to scourge each other.

Or will you say that a navy officer is a man, but that an American-born citizen, whose grandsire may have ennobled him by pouring out his blood at Bunker Hill—will you say that, by entering the service of his country as a common seaman, and standing ready to fight her foes, he thereby loses his manhood at the very time he most asserts it? Will you say that, by so doing, he degrades himself to the liability of the scourge, but if he tarries ashore in the time of danger, he is safe from that indignity? All our linked states, all four continents of mankind, unite in denouncing such a thought.

We plant the question, then, on the topmost argument of all. Irrespective of incidental considerations, we assert that flogging in the navy is opposed to the essential dignity of man, which no legislator has a right to violate ; that it is oppressive, and glaringly unequal in its operations ; that it is utterly repugnant to the spirit of our democratic institutions ; indeed, that it involves a lingering trait of the worst times of a

barbarous feudal aristocracy ; in a word, we denounce it as religiously, morally, and immutably *wrong*.

No matter, then, what may be the consequences of its abolition ; no matter if we have to dismantle our fleets, and our unprotected commerce should fall a prey to the spoiler, the awful admonitions of justice and humanity demand that abolition without procrastination ; in a voice that is not to be mistaken, demand that abolition to-day. It is not a dollar-and-cent question of expediency ; it is a matter of *right and wrong*. And if any man can lay his hand on his heart, and solemnly say that this scourging is right, let that man but once feel the lash on his own back, and in his agony you will hear the apostate call the seventh heavens to witness that it is *wrong*. And, in the name of immortal manhood, would to God that every man who upholds this thing were scourged at the gangway till he recanted !

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IS FLOGGING NECESSARY?

BUT White-Jacket is ready to come down from the lofty mast-head of an eternal principle, and fight you—Commodores and Captains of the navy—on your own quarter-deck, with your own weapons, at your own paces.

Exempt yourselves from the lash, you take Bible oaths to it that it is indispensable for others; you swear that, without the lash, no armed ship can be kept in suitable discipline. Be it proved to you, officers, and stamped upon your foreheads, that herein you are utterly wrong.

“Send them to Collingwood,” said Lord Nelson, “and *he* will bring them to order.” This was the language of that renowned Admiral, when his officers reported to him certain seamen of the fleet as wholly ungovernable. “Send them to Collingwood.” And who was Collingwood, that, after these navy rebels had been imprisoned and scourged without being brought to order, Collingwood could convert them to docility?

Who Admiral Collingwood was, as an historical hero,

history herself will tell you ; nor, in whatever triumphal hall they may be hanging, will the captured flags of Trafalgar fail to rustle at the mention of that name. But what Collingwood was as a disciplinarian on board the ships he commanded perhaps needs to be said. He was an officer, then, who held in abhorrence all corporal punishment ; who, though seeing more active service than any sea-officer of his time, yet, for years together, governed his men without inflicting the lash.

But these seamen of his must have been most exemplary saints, to have proved docile under so lenient a sway. Were they saints ? Answer, ye gaols and alms-houses throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, which, in Collingwood's time, were swept clean of the last lingering villain and pauper to man his majesty's fleets.

Still more, *that* was a period when the uttermost resources of England were taxed to the quick ; when the masts of her multiplied fleets almost transplanted her forests, all standing, to the sea ; when British press-gangs not only boarded foreign ships on the high seas, and boarded foreign pier-heads, but boarded their own merchantmen at the mouth of the Thames, and boarded the very firesides along its banks ; when Englishmen were knocked down and dragged into the navy, like cattle into the slaughter-house, with every mortal provocation to a mad desperation against the service that thus ran their unwilling heads into the muzzles of the

enemy's cannon. *This* was the time, and *these* the men that Collingwood governed without the lash.

I know it has been said that Lord Collingwood began by inflicting severe punishments, and afterwards ruling his sailors by the mere memory of a by-gone terror, which he could at pleasure revive; and that his sailors knew this, and hence their good behaviour under a lenient sway. But, granting the quoted assertion to be true, how comes it that many American Captains, who, after inflicting as severe punishment as ever Collingwood could have authorized—how comes it that *they*, also, have not been able to maintain good order without subsequent floggings, after once showing to the crew with what terrible attributes they were invested? But it is notorious, and a thing that I myself, in several instances, *know* to have been the case, that in the American navy, where corporal punishment has been most severe, it has also been most frequent.

But it is incredible that, with such crews as Lord Collingwood's—composed, in part, of the most desperate characters, the rakings of the gaols—it is incredible that such a set of men could have been governed by the mere *memory* of the lash. Some other influence must have been brought to bear; mainly, no doubt, the influence wrought by a powerful brain, and a determined, intrepid spirit over a miscellaneous rabble.

It is well known that Lord Nelson himself, in point of policy, was averse to flogging; and that, too, when

he had witnessed the mutinous effects of government abuses in the navy—unknown in our times—and which, to the terror of all England, developed themselves at the great mutiny of the *Nore*: an outbreak that for several weeks jeopardized the very existence of the British navy.

But we may press this thing nearly two centuries further back, for it is a matter of historical doubt whether, in Robert Blake's time, Cromwell's great admiral, such a thing as flogging was known at the gangways of his victorious fleets. And as in this matter we cannot go further back than to Blake, so we cannot advance further than to our own time, which shows Commodore Stockton, during the recent war with Mexico, governing the American squadron in the Pacific without employing the scourge.

But if of three famous English Admirals one has abhorred flogging, another almost governed his ships without it, and to the third it may be supposed to have been unknown, while an American Commander has, within the present year almost, been enabled to sustain the good discipline of an entire squadron in time of war without having an instrument of scourging on board, what inevitable inferences must be drawn, and how disastrous to the mental character of all advocates of navy flogging, who may happen to be navy officers themselves!

It cannot have escaped the discernment of any observer of mankind, that, in the presence of its con-

ventional inferiors, conscious imbecility in power often seeks to carry off that imbecility by assumptions of lordly severity. The amount of flogging on board an American man-of-war is, in many cases, in exact proportion to the professional and intellectual incapacity of her officers to command. Thus, in these cases, the law that authorizes flogging does but put a scourge into the hand of a fool. In most calamitous instances this has been shown.

It is a matter of record, that some English ships of war have fallen a prey to the enemy through the insubordination of the crew, induced by the witless cruelty of their officers ; officers so armed by the law that they could inflict that cruelty without restraint. Nor have there been wanting instances where the seamen have ran away with their ships, as in the case of the *Hermione* and *Danae*, and for ever rid themselves of the outrageous inflictions of their officers by sacrificing their lives to their fury.

Events like these aroused the attention of the British public at the time. But it was a tender theme, the public agitation of which the government was anxious to suppress. Nevertheless, whenever the thing was privately discussed, these terrific mutinies, together with the then prevailing insubordination of the men in the navy, were almost universally attributed to the exasperating system of flogging. And the necessity for flogging was generally believed to be directly referable to the impressment of such crowds of dissatisfied

men. And in high quarters it was held that if, by any mode, the English fleet could be manned without recourse to coercive measures, then the necessity of flogging would cease.

“If we abolish either impressment or flogging, the abolition of the other will follow as a matter of course.” This was the language of the *Edinburgh Review* at a still later period, 1824.

If, then, the necessity of flogging in the British armed marine was solely attributed to the impressment of the seamen, what faintest shadow of reason is there for the continuance of this barbarity in the American service, which is wholly free from the reproach of impressment.

It is true that, during a long period of non-impressment, and even down to the present day, flogging has been, and still is, the law of the English navy. But in things of this kind England should be nothing to us, except an example to be shunned. Nor should wise legislators wholly govern themselves by precedents, and conclude that, since scourging has so long prevailed, some virtue must reside in it. Not so. The world has arrived at a period which renders it the part of Wisdom to pay homage to the prospective precedents of the Future, in preference to those of the Past. The Past is dead, and has no resurrection; but the Future is endowed with such a life, that it lives to us even in anticipation. The Past is, in many things, the foe of

mankind ; the Future is, in all things, our friend. In the Past is no hope ; the Future is both hope and fruition. The Past is the text-book of tyrants ; the Future the Bible of the Free. Those who are solely governed by the Past stand like Lot's wife, crystallized in the act of looking backward, and for ever incapable of looking before.

Let us leave the Past, then, to dictate laws to immovable China ; let us abandon it to the Chinese Legitimists of Europe. But for us, we will have another captain to rule over us—that captain who ever marches at the head of his troop, and beckons them forward, not lingering in the rear, and impeding their march with lumbering baggage-wagons of old precedents. *This is the Past.*

But in many things we Americans are driven to a rejection of the maxims of the Past, seeing that, ere long, the van of the nations must, of right, belong to ourselves. There are occasions when it is for America to make precedents, and not to obey them. We should, if possible, prove a teacher to posterity, instead of being the pupil of by-gone generations. More shall come after us than have gone before ; the world is not yet middle-aged.

Escaped from the house of bondage, Israel of old did not follow after the ways of the Egyptians. To her was given an express dispensation ; to her were given new things under the sun. And we Americans are the

peculiar, chosen people—the Israel of our time ; we bear the ark of the liberties of the world. Seventy years ago we escaped from thrall ; and, besides our first birth-right—embracing one continent of earth—God has given to us, for a future inheritance, the broad domains of the political pagans, that shall yet come and lie down under the shade of our ark, without bloody hands being lifted. God has predestinated, mankind expects, great things from our race ; and great things we feel in our souls. We are the pioneers of the world ; the advance-guard, sent on through the wilderness of untried things, to break a new path in the New World that is ours. In our youth is our strength ; in our inexperience our wisdom. At a period when other nations have but lisped, our deep voice is heard afar. Long enough have we been sceptics with regard to ourselves, and doubted whether, indeed, the political Messiah had come. But he has come in *us*, if we would but give utterance to his promptings. And let us always remember, that with ourselves—almost for the first time in the history of earth—national selfishness is unbounded philanthropy ; for we cannot do a good to America, but we give alms to the world.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

SOME SUPERIOR OLD "LONDON DOCK" FROM THE WINE-COOLERS OF NEPTUNE.

WE had just slid into pleasant weather, drawing near to the Tropics, when all hands were thrown into a wonderful excitement by an event that eloquently appealed to many palates.

A man at the fore-top-sail-yard sung out that there were eight or ten dark objects floating on the sea, some three points off our lee-bow.

"Keep her off three points!" cried Captain Claret, to the quarter-master of the *cun*.

And thus, with all our batteries, store-rooms, and five hundred men, with their baggage, and beds, and provisions, at one move of a round bit of mahogany, our great embattled-ark edged away for the strangers, as easily as a boy turns to the right or left in pursuit of insects in the field.

Directly the man on the top-sail-yard reported the dark objects to be hogsheads. Instantly all the top-men were straining their eyes, in delirious expectation of having their long *grog-fast* broken at last, and that, too, by what seemed an almost miraculous intervention. It was a curious circumstance that, without

knowing the contents of the hogsheads, they yet seemed certain that the staves encompassed the thing they longed for.

Sail was now shortened, our headway was stopped, and a cutter was lowered, with orders to tow the fleet of strangers alongside. The men sprang to their oars with a will, and soon five goodly puncheons lay wallowing in the sea, just under the main chains. We got overboard the slings, and hoisted them out of the water.

It was a sight that Bacchus and his Bacchanals would have gloated over. Each puncheon was of a deep-green colour, so covered with minute barnacles and shell-fish, and streaming with sea-weed, that it needed long searching to find out their bung-holes; they looked like venerable old *loggerhead-turtles*. How long they had been tossing about, and making voyages for the benefit of the flavour of their contents, no one could tell. In trying to raft them ashore, or on board of some merchant-ship, they must have drifted off to sea. This we inferred from ropes that lengthwise united them, and which from one point of view made them resemble a section of a sea-serpent. They were *struck* into the gun-deck, where the eager crowd being kept off by sentries, the cooper was called with his tools.

“Bung up, and bilge free!” he cried, in an ecstasy, flourishing his driver and hammer.

Upon clearing away the barnacles and moss, a flat

sort of shell-fish was found, closely adhering, like a California-shell, right over one of the bungs. Doubtless this shell-fish had there taken up his quarters, and thrown his own body into the breach, in order the better to preserve the precious contents of the cask. The bystanders were breathless, when at last this puncheon was canted over and a tin-pot held to the orifice. What was to come forth? salt-water or wine? But a rich purple tide soon settled the question, and the lieutenant assigned to taste it, with a loud and satisfactory smack of his lips, pronounced it Port!

“Oporto!” cried Mad Jack, “and no mistake!”

But, to the surprise, grief, and consternation of the sailors, an order now came from the quarter-deck to “strike the strangers down into the main-hold!” This proceeding occasioned all sorts of censorious observations upon the Captain, who, of course, had authorized it.

It must be related here that, on the passage out from home, the *Neversink* had touched at Madeira; and there, as is often the case with men-of-war, the Commodore and Captain had laid in a goodly stock of wines for their own private tables, and the benefit of their foreign visitors. And although the Commodore was a small, spare man, who evidently emptied but few glasses, yet Captain Claret was a portly gentleman, with a crimson face, whose father had fought at the battle of the Brandywine, and whose brother had commanded

the well-known frigate named in honour of that engagement. And his whole appearance evinced that Captain Claret himself had fought many Brandywine battles ashore in honour of his sire's memory, and commanded in many bloodless Brandywine actions at sea.

It was therefore with some savour of provocation that the sailors held forth on the ungenerous conduct of Captain Claret, in stepping in between them and Providence, as it were, which by this lucky windfall, they held, seemed bent upon relieving their necessities; while Captain Claret himself, with an inexhaustible cellar, emptied his Madeira decanters at his leisure.

But next day all hands were electrified by the old familiar sound—so long hushed—of the drum rolling to grog.

After that the port was served out twice a day, till all was expended.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE CHAPLAIN AND CHAPEL IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

THE next day was Sunday; a fact set down in the almanac, spite of merchant seamen's maxim, that *there are no Sundays off soundings*.

No Sundays off soundings, indeed! No Sundays on shipboard! You may as well say there should be no Sundays in churches; for is not a ship modelled after a church? has it not three spires—three steeples? yea, and on the gun-deck, a bell and a belfry? And does not that bell merrily peal every Sunday morning, to summon the crew to devotions?

At any rate, there were Sundays on board this particular frigate of ours, and a clergyman also. He was a slender, middle-aged man, of an amiable deportment and irreproachable conversation; but I must say, that his sermons were but ill calculated to benefit the crew. He had drank at the mystic fountain of Plato; his head had been turned by the Germans; and this I will say, that White-Jacket himself saw him with Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* in his hand.

Fancy, now, this transcendental divine standing behind a gun-carriage on the main-deck, and addressing

five hundred salt-sea sinners upon the psychological phenomena of the soul, and the ontological necessity of every sailor's saving it at all hazards. He enlarged upon the follies of the ancient philosophers; learnedly alluded to the Phædon of Plato; exposed the follies of Simplicius's Commentary on Aristotle's "De Cælo," by arraying against that clever Pagan author the admired tract of Tertullian—*De Præscriptionibus Hæreticorum*—and concluded by a Sanscrit invocation. He was particularly hard upon the Gnostics and Marcionites of the second century of the Christian era; but he never, in the remotest manner, attacked the every-day vices of the nineteenth century, as eminently illustrated in our man-of-war world. Concerning drunkenness, fighting, flogging, and oppression—things expressly or impliedly prohibited by Christianity—he never said aught. But the most mighty Commodore and Captain sat before him; and in general, if, in a monarchy, the state form the audience of the church, little evangelical piety will be preached. Hence, the harmless, non-committal abstrusities of our Chaplain were not to be wondered at. He was no Massillon, to thunder forth his ecclesiastical rhetoric, even when a Louis le Grand was enthroned among his congregation. Nor did the chaplains who preached on the quarter-deck of Lord Nelson ever allude to the guilty Felix, nor to Delilah, nor practically reason of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,

when that renowned Admiral sat, sword-belted, before them.

During these Sunday discourses, the officers always sat in a circle round the Chaplain, and, with a business-like air, steadily preserved the utmost propriety. In particular, our old Commodore himself made a point of looking intensely edified; and not a sailor on board but believed that the Commodore, being the greatest man present, must alone comprehend the mystic sentences that fell from our parson's lips.

Of all the noble lords in the ward-room, this lord-spiritual, with the exception of the Purser, was in the highest favour with the Commodore, who frequently conversed with him in a close and confidential manner. Nor, upon reflection, was this to be marvelled at, seeing how efficacious it is, in some governments, for the throne and altar to go hand-in-hand.

The accommodations of our chapel were very poor. We had nothing to sit on but the great gun-rammers and capstan-bars, placed horizontally upon shot-boxes. These seats were exceedingly uncomfortable, wearing out our trowsers and our tempers, and, no doubt, impeded the conversion of many valuable souls.

To say the truth, man-of-war's-men, in general, make but poor auditors upon these occasions, and adopt every possible means to elude them. Often the boatswain's-mates were obliged to drive the men to service, violently swearing upon these occasions, as upon every other.

“Go to prayers, d—n you ! To prayers, you rascals—to prayers !” In this clerical invitation Captain Claret would frequently unite.

At this Jack Chase would sometimes make merry. “Come, boys, don’t hang back,” he would say ; “come, let us go hear the parson talk about his Lord High Admiral Plato, and Commodore Socrates.”

But, in one instance, grave exception was taken to this summons. A remarkably serious, but bigoted seaman, a sheet-anchor-man—whose private devotions may hereafter be alluded to—once touched his hat to the Captain, and respectfully said, “Sir, I am a Baptist ; the chaplain is an Episcopalian ; his form of worship is not mine ; I do not believe with him, and it is against my conscience to be under his ministry. May I be allowed, sir, *not* to attend service on the half-deck ?”

“You will be allowed, sir !” said the Captain, haughtily, “to obey the laws of the ship. If you absent yourself from prayers on Sunday mornings, you know the penalty.”

According to the Articles of War, the Captain was perfectly right ; but if any law requiring an American to attend divine service against his will be a law respecting the establishment of religion, then the Articles of War are, in this one particular, opposed to the American Constitution, which expressly says, “Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of

religion, or the free exercise thereof." But this is only one of several things in which the Articles of War are repugnant to that instrument. They will be glanced at in another part of the narrative.

The motive which prompts the introduction of chaplains into the Navy cannot but be warmly responded to by every Christian. But it does not follow, that because chaplains are to be found in men-of-war, that, under the present system, they achieve much good, or that, under any other, they ever will.

How can it be expected that the religion of peace should flourish in an oaken castle of war? How can it be expected that the clergyman, whose pulpit is a forty-two-pounder, should convert sinners to a faith that enjoins them to turn the right cheek when the left is smitten? How is it to be expected that when, according to the XLII^d of the Articles of War, as they now stand unrepealed on the Statute Book, "a bounty shall be paid" (to the officers and crew) "by the United States government of \$20 for each person on board any ship of an enemy which shall be sunk or destroyed by any United States ship;" and when by a subsequent section (vii.), it is provided among other apportionings, that the chaplain shall receive "two twentieths" of this price paid for sinking and destroying ships full of human beings;—how is it to be expected that a clergyman, thus provided for, should prove efficacious in enlarging upon the criminality of

Judas, who, for thirty pieces of silver, betrayed his Master ?

Although, by the regulations of the Navy, each seaman's mess on board the *Neversink* was furnished with a Bible, these Bibles were seldom or never to be seen, except on Sunday mornings, when usage demands that they shall be exhibited by the cooks of the messes, when the master-at-arms goes his rounds on the berth-deck. At such times, they usually surmounted a highly polished tin-pot placed on the lid of the chest.

Yet, for all this, the Christianity of man-of-war's-men, and their disposition to contribute to pious enterprises, are often relied upon. Several times subscription papers were circulated among the crew of the *Neversink*, while in harbour, under the direct patronage of the Chaplain. One was for the purpose of building a seaman's chapel in China; another to pay the salary of a tract distributor in Greece; a third to raise a fund for the benefit of an African Colonization Society.

Where the Captain himself is a moral man, he makes a far better chaplain for his crew than any clergyman can be. This is sometimes illustrated in the case of sloops of war and armed brigs, which are not allowed a regular chaplain. I have known one crew, who were warmly attached to a naval commander worthy of their love, who have mustered even with alacrity to the call to prayer; and when their Captain

would read the Church of England service to them, would present a congregation not to be surpassed for earnestness and devotion by any Scottish kirk. It seemed like family devotions, where the head of the house is foremost in confessing himself before his Maker. But our own hearts are our best prayer-rooms, and the chaplains who can most help us are ourselves.

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE FRIGATE IN HARBOUR.—THE BOATS.—GRAND STATE RECEPTION OF
THE COMMODORE.

IN good time we were up with the parallel of Rio de Janeiro, and, standing in for the land, the mist soon cleared; and high aloft the famed Sugar Loaf pinnacle was seen, our bowsprit pointing for it straight as a die.

As we glided on toward our anchorage, the bands of the various men-of-war in harbour saluted us with national airs, and gallantly lowered their ensigns. Nothing can exceed the courteous etiquette of these ships, of all nations, in greeting their brethren. Of all men, your accomplished duellist is generally the most polite.

We lay in Rio some weeks, lazily taking in stores and otherwise preparing for the passage home. But though Rio is one of the most magnificent bays in the world; though the city itself contains many striking objects; and though much might be said of the Sugar Loaf and Signal Hill heights; and the little islet of Lucia; and the fortified Ilha dos Cobras, or Isle of the Snakes (though the only anacondas and adders now found in the arsenals there are great guns and pistols);

and Lord Wood's Nose—a lofty eminence said by seamen to resemble his lordship's conch-shell; and the Prays do Flamingo—a noble tract of beach, so called from its having been the resort, in olden times, of those gorgeous birds; and the charming Bay of Botofogo, which, spite of its name, is fragrant as the neighbouring Larangieros, or Valley of the Oranges; and the green Gloria Hill, surmounted by the belfries of the queenly Church of Nossa Senora de Gloria; and the iron-gray Benedictine convent near by; and the fine drive and promenade, Passeo Publico; and the massive arch-over-arch aqueduct, Arcos de Carico; and the Emperor's Palace; and the Empress's Gardens; and the fine Church de Candelaria; and the gilded throne on wheels, drawn by eight silken, silver-belled mules, in which, of pleasant evenings, his Imperial Majesty is driven out of town to his Moorish villa of St. Christova—ay, though much might be said of all this, yet must I forbear, if I may, and adhere to my one proper object, *the world in a man-of-war*.

Behold, now, the Neversink under a new aspect. With all her batteries, she is tranquilly lying in harbour, surrounded by English, French, Dutch, Portuguese, and Brazilian seventy-fours, moored in the deep-green water, close under the lee of that oblong, castellated mass of rock, Ilha dos Cobras, which, with its port-holes and lofty flag-staffs, looks like another man-of-war, fast anchored in the bay. But what is an

insular fortress, indeed, but an embattled land-slide into the sea from the world Gibaltars and Quebecs? And what a main-land fortress but a few decks of a line-of-battle ship transplanted ashore? They are all one—all, as King David, men-of-war from their youth.

Ay, behold now the *Neversink* at her anchors, in many respects presenting a different appearance from what she presented at sea. Nor is the routine of life on board the same.

At sea there is more to employ the sailors, and less temptation to violations of the law. Whereas, in port, unless some particular service engages them, they lead the laziest of lives, beset by all the allurements of the shore, though perhaps that shore they may never touch.

Unless you happen to belong to one of the numerous boats, which, in a man-of-war in harbour, are continually plying to and from the land, you are mostly thrown upon your own resources to while away the time. Whole days frequently pass without your being individually called upon to lift a finger; for though, in the merchant-service, they make a point of keeping the men always busy about something or other, yet, to employ five hundred sailors when there is nothing definite to be done, wholly surpasses the ingenuity of any First Lieutenant in the Navy.

As mention has just been made of the numerous boats employed in harbour, something more may as well be put down concerning them. Our frigate carried

a very large boat—as big as a small sloop—called a *launch*, which was generally used for getting off wood, water, and other bulky articles. Besides this, she carried four boats of an arithmetical progression in point of size—the largest being known as the first cutter, the next largest the second cutter, then the third and fourth cutters. She also carried a Commodore's Barge, a Captain's Gig, and a "dingy," a small yawl, with a crew of apprentice boys. All these boats, except the "dingy," had their regular crews, who were subordinate to their cockswains, or steersmen—*petty officers*, receiving pay in addition to their seaman's wages.

The *launch* was manned by the old Tritons of the fore-castle, who were no ways particular about their dress, while the other boats—commissioned for genteeler duties—were rowed by young fellows, mostly, who had a dandy eye to their personal appearance. Above all, the officers see to it that the Commodore's Barge and the Captain's Gig are manned by gentlemanly youths, who may do credit to their country, and form agreeable objects for the eyes of the Commodore or Captain to repose upon as he tranquilly sits in the stern, when pulled ashore by his barge-men or gig-men, as the case may be. Some sailors are very fond of belonging to the boats, and deem it a great honour to be a *Commodore's bargeman*; but others, perceiving no particular distinction in that office, do not court it so much.

On the second day after arriving at Rio, one of the gig-men fell sick, and, to my no small concern, I found myself temporarily appointed to his place.

"Come, White-Jacket, rig yourself in white—that's the gig's uniform to-day; you are a gig-man, my boy—give ye joy!" This was the first announcement of the fact that I heard; but soon after it was officially ratified.

I was about to seek the First Lieutenant, and plead the scantiness of my wardrobe, which wholly disqualified me to fill so distinguished a station, when I heard the bugler call away the "gig;" and, without more ado, I slipped into a clean frock, which a messmate doffed for my benefit, and soon after found myself pulling off his High Mightiness, the Captain, to an English seventy-four.

As we were bounding along, the cockswain suddenly cried "Oars!" At the word every oar was suspended in the air, while our Commodore's barge floated by, bearing that dignitary himself. At the sight, Captain Claret removed his chapeau, and saluted profoundly, our boat laying motionless on the water. But the barge never stopped; and the Commodore made but a slight return to the obsequious salute he had received.

We then resumed rowing, and presently I heard "Oars!" again; but from another boat, the second cutter, which turned out to be carrying a Lieutenant ashore. It was now Captain Claret's turn to be honoured. The cutter lay still, and the Lieutenant off

hat; while the Captain only nodded, and we kept on our way.

This naval etiquette is very much like the etiquette at the Grand Porte of Constantinople, where, after washing the Sublime Sultan's feet, the Grand Vizier avenges himself on an Emir, who does the same office for him.

When we arrived aboard the English seventy-four, the Captain was received with the usual honours, and the gig's crew were conducted below, and hospitably regaled with some spirits, served out by order of the officer of the deck.

Soon after, the English crew went to quarters; and as they stood up at their guns, all along the main-deck, a row of beef-fed Britons, stalwart-looking fellows, I was struck with the contrast they afforded to similar sights on board of the Neversink.

For on board of us, our "*quarters*" showed an array of rather slender, lean-cheeked chaps. But then I made no doubt, that, in a sea-tussle, these lantern-jawed varlets would have approved themselves as slender Damascus blades, nimble and flexible; whereas these Britains would have been, perhaps, as sturdy broad-swords. Yet every one remembers that story of Saladin and Richard trying their respective blades; how gallant Richard clove an anvil in twain, or something quite as ponderous, and Saladin elegantly severed a cushion; so that the two monarchs were even—each excelling in his way—though, unfortunately for my simile, in

a patriotic point of view, Richard whipped Saladin's armies in the end.

There happened to be a lord on board of this ship—the younger son of an earl, they told me. He was a fine-looking fellow. I chanced to stand by when he put a question to an Irish captain of a gun; upon the seaman's inadvertently saying *sir* to him, his lordship looked daggers at the slight; and the sailor, touching his hat a thousand times, said, "Pardon, your honour; I meant to say *my lord*, sir!"

I was much pleased with an old white-headed musician, who stood at the main hatchway, with his enormous bass drum full before him, and thumping it sturdily to the tune of "God save the King!" though small mercy did he have on his drum-heads. Two little boys were clashing cymbals, and another was blowing a fife, with his cheeks puffed out like the plumpest of his country's plum-puddings.

When we returned from this trip, there again took place that ceremonious reception of our Captain on board the vessel he commanded, which always had struck me as exceedingly diverting.

In the first place, while in port, one of the quarter-masters is always stationed on the poop with a spy-glass, to look out for all boats approaching, and report the same to the officer of the deck; also, who it is that may be coming in them; so that preparations may be made accordingly. As soon, then, as the gig touched the side, a mightily shrill piping was heard, as if some

boys were celebrating the Fourth of July with penny whistles. This proceeded from a boatswain's mate, who, standing at the gangway, was thus honouring the Captain's return after his long and perilous absence.

The Captain then slowly mounted the ladder, and gravely marching through a lane of "*side-boys*," so called—all in their best bibs and tuckers, and who stood making sly faces behind his back—was received by all the Lieutenants in a body, their hats in their hands, and making a prodigious scraping and bowing, as if they had just graduated at a French dancing-school. Meanwhile, preserving an erect, inflexible, and ram-rod carriage, and slightly touching his chapeau, the Captain made his ceremonious way to the cabin, disappearing behind the scenes, like the pasteboard ghost in Hamlet.

But these ceremonies are nothing to those in homage of the Commodore's arrival, even should he depart and arrive twenty times a day. Upon such occasions, the whole marine guard, except the sentries on duty, are marshalled on the quarter-deck, presenting arms as the Commodore passes them; while their commanding officer gives the military salute with his sword, as if making masonic signs. Meanwhile, the boatswain himself—not a *boatswain's mate*—is keeping up a persevering whistling with his silver pipe; for the Commodore is never greeted with the rude whistle of a boatswain's subaltern; *that* would be positively insulting. All the Lieutenants and Midshipmen, besides the Captain him-

self, are drawn up in a phalanx, and off hat together; and the *side-boys*, whose number is now increased to ten or twelve, make an imposing display at the gangway; while the whole brass band, elevated upon the poop, strike up, "See! the Conquering Hero comes!" At least, this was the tune that our Captain always hinted, by a gesture, to the captain of the band, whenever the Commodore arrived from shore. It conveyed a complimentary appreciation, on the Captain's part, of the Commodore's heroism during the late war.

To return to the gig. As I did not relish the idea of being a sort of body-servant to Captain Claret—since his gigmen were often called upon to scrub his cabin floor, and perform other duties for him—I made it my particular business to get rid of my appointment in his boat as soon as possible, and the next day after receiving it succeeded in procuring a substitute, who was glad of the chance to fill the position I so much undervalued.

And thus, with our counterlikes and dislikes, most of us man-of-war's-men harmoniously dove-tail into each other, and, by our very points of opposition, unite in a clever whole, like the parts of a Chinese puzzle. But as, in a Chinese puzzle, many pieces are hard to place so there are some unfortunate fellows who can never slip into their proper angles, and thus the whole puzzle becomes a puzzle indeed, which is the precise condition of the greatest puzzle in the world—this man-of-war world itself.

CHAPTER XL.

SOME OF THE CEREMONIES IN A MAN-OF-WAR UNNECESSARY AND
INJURIOUS.

THE ceremonials of a man-of-war, some of which have been described in the preceding chapter, may merit a reflection or two.

The general usages of the American Navy are founded upon the usages that prevailed in the Navy of monarchical England more than a century ago ; nor have they been materially altered since. And while both England and America have become greatly liberalized in the interval ; while shore pomp in high places has come to be regarded by the more intelligent masses of men as belonging to the absurd, ridiculous, and mock-heroic ; while that most truly august of all the majesties of earth, the President of the United States, may be seen entering his residence with his umbrella under his arm, and no brass band or military guard at his heels, and unostentatiously taking his seat by the side of the meanest citizen in a public conveyance ; while this is the case, there still lingers in American men-of-war all the stilted etiquette and childish parade of the old-fashioned court of Madrid. Indeed, so far as the things

that meet the eye are concerned, an American Commodore is by far a greater man than the President of twenty millions of freemen.

But we plain people ashore might very willingly be content to leave these commodores in the unmolested possession of their gilded penny whistles, rattles, and gewgaws, since they seem to take so much pleasure in them, were it not that all this is attended by consequences to their subordinates in the last degree to be deplored.

While hardly any one will question that a naval officer should be surrounded by circumstances calculated to impart a requisite dignity to his position, it is not the less certain that, by the excessive pomp he at present maintains, there is naturally and unavoidably generated a feeling of servility and debasement in the hearts of most of the seamen who continually behold a fellow-mortal flourishing over their heads like the archangel Michael with a thousand wings. And as, in degree, this same pomp is observed toward their inferiors by all the grades of commissioned officers, even down to a midshipman, the evil is proportionably multiplied.

It would not at all diminish a proper respect for the officers, and subordination to their authority among the seamen, were all this idle parade—only ministering to the arrogance of the officers, without at all benefiting the State—completely done away. But to do so,

we voters and lawgivers ourselves must be no respecters of persons.

That saying about *levelling upward, and not downward*, may seem very fine to those who cannot see its self-involved absurdity. But the truth is, that to gain the true level, in some things, we *must* cut downward ; for how can you make every sailor a commodore ? or how raise the valleys, without filling them up with the superfluous tops of the hills ?

Some discreet, but democratic legislation in this matter is much to be desired. And by bringing down naval officers, in these things at least, without affecting their legitimate dignity and authority, we shall correspondingly elevate the common sailor, without relaxing the subordination in which he should by all means be retained.

CHAPTER XLI.

A MAN-OF-WAR LIBRARY.

NOWHERE does time pass more heavily than with most man-of-war's-men on board their craft in harbour.

One of my principal antidotes against *ennui* in Rio, was reading. There was a public library on board, paid for by government, and entrusted to the custody of one of the marine corporals, a little, dried-up man, of a somewhat literary turn. He had once been a clerk in a Post-office ashore; and, having been long accustomed to hand over letters when called for, he was now just the man to hand over books. He kept them in a large cask on the berth-deck, and when seeking a particular volume, had to capsize it like a barrel of potatoes. This made him very cross and irritable, as most all Librarians are. Who had the selection of these books, I do not know, but some of them must have been selected by our Chaplain, who so pranced on Coleridge's "*High German Horse*."

Mason Good's Book of Nature—a very good book, to be sure, but not precisely adapted to tarry tastes—was one of these volumes; and Machiavel's Art of War—which was very dry fighting; and a folio of

Tillotson's Sermons—the best of reading for divines, indeed, but with little relish for a main-top-man ; and Locke's Essays—incomparable essays, everybody knows, but miserable reading at sea ; and Plutarch's Lives—superexcellent biographies which pit Greek against Roman in beautiful style, but then, in a sailor's estimation, not to be mentioned with the *Lives of the Admirals* ; and Blair's Lectures, University Edition—a fine treatise on rhetoric, but having nothing to say about nautical phrases, such as “ *splicing the main brace*,” “ *passing a gammoning*,” “ *pudding the dolphin*,” and “ *making a Carrick-bend* ;” besides numerous invaluable but unreadable tomes, that might have been purchased cheap at the auction of some college-professor's library.

But I found ample entertainment in a few choice old authors, whom I stumbled upon in various parts of the ship, among the inferior officers. One was “ *Morgan's History of Algiers*,” a famous old quarto, abounding in picturesque narratives of corsairs, captives, dungeons, and sea-fights ; and making mention of a cruel old Dey, who, toward the latter part of his life, was so filled with remorse for his cruelties and crimes that he could not stay in bed after four o'clock in the morning, but had to rise in great trepidation and walk off his bad feelings till breakfast time. And another venerable octavo, containing a certificate from Sir Christopher Wren to its authenticity, entitled “ *Knox's Captivity in*

Ceylon, 1681"—abounding in stories about the Devil, who was superstitiously supposed to tyrannize over that unfortunate land; to mollify him, the priests offered up buttermilk, red-cocks, and sausages; and the Devil ran roaring about in the woods, frightening travellers out of their wits; insomuch that the Islanders bitterly lamented to Knox that their country was full of devils, and, consequently, there was no hope for their eventual well-being. Knox swears that he himself heard the Devil roar, though he did not see his horns; it was a terrible noise, he says, like the baying of a hungry mastiff.

Then there was Walpole's Letters—very witty, pert, and polite—and some odd volumes of plays, each of which was a precious casket of jewels of good things, shaming the trash, nowadays passed off for dramas, containing "The Jew of Malta," "Old Fortunatus," "The City Madam," "Volpone," "The Alchymist," and other glorious old dramas of the age of Marlow and Jonson, and that literary Damon and Pythias, the magnificent, mellow old Beaumont and Fletcher, who have sent the long shadow of their reputation, side by side with Shakspeare's, far down the endless vale of posterity. And may that shadow never be less! but as for St. Shakspeare, may his never be more, lest the commentators arise, and settling upon his sacred text, like unto locusts, devour it clean up, leaving never a dot over an I.

I diversified this reading of mine by borrowing Moore's "*Loves of the Angels*" from Rose-water, who recommended it as "*de charmingest of wolumes ;*" and a Negro Song-book, containing *Sittin' on a Rail*, *Gumbo Squash*, and *Jim along Josey*, from Broadbit, a sheet-anchor-man. The sad taste of this old tar, in admiring such vulgar stuff, was much denounced by Rose-water, whose own predilections were of a more elegant nature, as evinced by his exalted opinion of the literary merits of the "*Loves of the Angels*."

I was by no means the only reader of books on board the Neversink. Several other sailors were diligent readers, though their studies did not lie in the way of belles-lettres. Their favourite authors were such as you may find at the book-stalls around Fulton Market ; they were slightly physiological in their nature. My book experiences on board of the frigate proved an example of a fact which every book-lover must have experienced before me, namely, that though public libraries have an imposing air, and doubtless contain invaluable volumes, yet, somehow, the books that prove most agreeable, grateful, and companionable, are those we pick up by chance here and there ; those which seem put into our hands by Providence ; those which pretend to little, but abound in much.

CHAPTER XLII.

KILLING TIME IN A MAN-OF-WAR IN HARBOUR.

READING was by no means the only method adopted by my shipmates in whiling away the long tedious hours in harbour. In truth, many of them could not have read, had they wanted to ever so much; in early youth their primers had been sadly neglected. Still, they had other pursuits; some were expert at the needle, and employed their time in making elaborate shirts, stitching picturesque eagles, and anchors, and all the stars of the federated states in the collars thereof; so that when they at last completed and put on these shirts, they may be said to have hoisted the American colours.

Others excelled in *tattooing*, or *pricking*, as it is called in a man-of-war. Of these prickers, two had long been celebrated in their way, as consummate masters of the art. Each had a small box full of tools and colouring matter; and they charged so high for their services, that at the end of the cruise they were supposed to have cleared upwards of four hundred

dollars. They would *prick* you to order a palm-tree, an anchor, a crucifix, a lady, a lion, an eagle, or any thing else you might want.

The Roman Catholic sailors on board had at least the crucifix pricked on their arms, and for this reason: If they chanced to die in a Catholic land, they would be sure of a decent burial in consecrated ground, as the priest would be sure to observe the symbol of Mother Church on their persons. They would not fare as Protestant sailors dying in Callao, who are shoved under the sands of St. Lorenzo, a solitary, volcanic island in the harbour, overrun with reptiles, their heretical bodies not being permitted to repose in the more genial loam of Lima.

And many sailors not Catholics were anxious to have the crucifix painted on them, owing to a curious superstition of theirs. They affirm—some of them—that if you have that mark tattooed upon all four limbs, you might fall overboard among seven hundred and seventy-five thousand white sharks, all dinnerless, and not one of them would so much as dare to smell at your little finger.

We had one fore-top-man on board, who, during the entire cruise, was having an endless cable *pricked* round and round his waist, so that, when his frock was off, he looked like a capstan with a hawser coiled round about it. This fore-top-man paid eighteen pence per link for the cable, besides being on the smart the whole

cruise, suffering the effects of his repeated puncturings; so he paid very dear for his cable.

One other mode of passing time while in port was cleaning and polishing your *bright-work*; for it must be known that, in men-of-war, every sailor has some brass or steel of one kind or other to keep in high order—like house-maids, whose business it is to keep well-polished the knobs on the front-door railing and the parlour-grates.

Excepting the ring-bolts, eye-bolts, and belaying-pins scattered about the decks, this bright-work, as it is called, is principally about the guns, embracing the “*monkey-tails*” of the carronades, the screws, *prickers*, little irons, and other things.

The portion that fell to my own share I kept in superior order, quite equal in polish to Rogers’s best cutlery. I received the most extravagant encomiums from the officers; one of whom offered to match me against any brasier or brass-polisher in her British Majesty’s Navy. Indeed, I devoted myself to the work body and soul, and thought no pains too painful, and no labour too laborious, to achieve the highest attainable polish possible for us poor lost sons of Adam to reach.

Upon one occasion, even, when woollen rags were scarce, and no burned-brick was to be had from the ship’s-yeoman, I sacrificed the corners of my woollen shirt, and used some dentifrice I had, as substitutes for

the rags and burned-brick. The dentrifice operated delightfully, and made the threading of my carronade screw shine and grin again, like a set of false teeth in an eager heiress-hunter's mouth.

Still another mode of passing time, was arraying yourself in your best "*togs*," and promenading up and down the gun-deck, admiring the shore scenery from the port-holes, which, in an amphitheatrical bay like Rio—belted about by the most varied and charming scenery of hill, dale, moss, meadow, court, castle, tower, grove, vine, vineyard, aqueduct, palace, square, island, fort—is very much like lounging round a circular cosmorama, and ever and anon lazily peeping through the glasses here and there. Oh ! there is something worth living for, even in our man-of-war world ; and one glimpse of a bower of grapes, though a cable's length off, is almost satisfaction for dining off a shank-bone salted down.

This promenading was chiefly patronised by the marines, and particularly by Colbrook, a remarkably handsome and very gentlemanly corporal among them. He was a complete lady's man ; with fine black eyes, bright red cheeks, glossy jet whiskers, and a refined organization of the whole man. He used to array himself in his regimentals, and saunter about like an officer of the Coldstream Guards, strolling down to his club in St. James's. Every time he passed me, he would heave a sentimental sigh, and hum to himself "*The girl I left behind me.*" This fine corporal afterward became a

representative in the Legislature of the State of New Jersey ; for I saw his name returned about a year after my return home.

But, after all, there was not much room, while in port, for promenading, at least on the gun-deck, for the whole larboard side is kept clear for the benefit of the officers, who appreciate the advantages of having a clear stroll fore and aft; and they well know that the sailors had much better be crowded together on the other side than that the set of their own coat-tails should be impaired by brushing against their tarry trowsers.

One other way of killing time while in port is playing checkers ; that is, when it is permitted ; for it is not every navy captain who will allow such a scandalous proceeding. But, as for Captain Claret, though he *did* like his glass of Madeira uncommonly well, and was an undoubted descendant from the hero of the Battle of the Brandywine, and though he sometimes showed a suspiciously flushed face when superintending in person the flogging of a sailor for getting intoxicated against his particular orders, yet I will say for Captain Claret that, upon the whole, he was rather indulgent to his crew, so long as they were perfectly docile. He allowed them to play checkers as much as they pleased. More than once I have known him, when going forward to the fore-castle, pick his way carefully among scores of canvass checker-cloths spread upon the deck, so as not to tread upon the men—the checker-men and man-of-

war's-men included ; but, in a certain sense, they were both one ; for, as the sailors used their checker-men, so, at quarters, their officers used these man-of-war's-men.

But Captain Claret's leniency in permitting checkers on board his ship might have arisen from the following little circumstance, confidentially communicated to me. Soon after the ship had sailed from home, checkers were prohibited ; whereupon the sailors were exasperated against the Captain ; and one night, when he was walking round the forecastle, bim ! came an iron belaying-pin past his ears ; and while he was dodging that, bim ! came another, from the other side ; so that, it being a very dark night, and nobody to be seen, and it being impossible to find out the trespassers, he thought it best to get back into his cabin as soon as possible. Some time after—just as if the belaying-pins had nothing to do with it—it was indirectly rumoured that the checker-boards might be brought out again, which—as a philosophical shipmate observed—showed that Captain Claret was a man of a ready understanding, and could understand a hint as well as any other man, even when conveyed by several pounds of iron.

Some of the sailors were very precise about their checker-cloths, and even went so far that they would not let you play with them unless you first washed your hands, especially if so be you had just come from tarring down the rigging.

Another way of beguiling the tedious hours, is to get a cosy seat somewhere, and fall into as snug a little reverie as you can. Or if a seat is not to be had—which is frequently the case—then get a tolerably comfortable *stand-up* against the bulwarks, and begin to think about home and bread and butter—always inseparably connected to a wanderer—which will very soon bring delicious tears into your eyes; for every one knows what a luxury is grief, when you can get a private closet to enjoy it in, and no Paul Prys intrude. Several of my shore friends, indeed, when suddenly overwhelmed by some disaster, always make a point of flying to the first oyster-cellar, and shutting themselves up in a box, with nothing but a plate of stewed oysters, some crackers, the castor, and a decanter of old port.

Still another way of killing time in harbour, is to lean over the bulwarks, and speculate upon where under the sun you are going to be that day next year, which is a subject full of interest to every living soul; so much so, that there is a particular day of a particular month of the year, which, from my earliest recollections, I have always kept the run of, so that I can even now tell just where I was on that identical day of every year past since I was twelve years old. And when I am all alone, to run over this almanac in my mind is almost as entertaining as to read my diary, and far more interesting than to peruse a table of

logarithms on a rainy afternoon. I always keep the anniversary of that day with lamb and peas, and a pint of Sherry, for it comes in Spring. But when it came round in the Neversink, I could get neither lamb, peas, nor Sherry.

But perhaps the best way to drive the hours before you four-in-hand, is to select a soft plank on the gun-deck, and go to sleep. A fine specific, which seldom fails, unless, to be sure, you have been sleeping all the twenty-four hours beforehand.

Whenever employed in killing time in harbour, I have lifted myself up on my elbow and looked around me, and seen so many of my shipmates all employed at the same common business ; all under lock and key ; all hopeless prisoners like myself ; all under martial law ; all dieting on salt beef and biscuit ; all in one uniform ; all yawning, gaping, and stretching in concert, it was then that I used to feel a certain love and affection for them, grounded, doubtless, on a fellow-feeling.

And though, in a previous part of this narrative, I have mentioned that I used to hold myself somewhat aloof from the mass of seamen on board the Neversink ; and though this was true, and my real acquaintances were comparatively few, and my intimates still fewer, yet, to tell the truth, it is quite impossible to live so long with five hundred of your fellow-beings, even if not of the best of families in the land, and with morals

that would not be spoiled by further cultivation ; it is quite impossible, I say, to live with five hundred of your fellow-beings, be they who they may, without feeling a common sympathy with them at the time, and ever after cherishing some sort of interest in their welfare.

The truth of this was curiously corroborated by a rather equivocal acquaintance of mine, who, among the men, went by the name of "*Shakings*." He belonged to the fore-hold, whence, of a dark night, he would sometimes emerge to chat with the sailors on deck. I never liked the man's looks ; I protest it was a mere accident that gave me the honour of his acquaintance, and generally I did my best to avoid him, when he would come skulking, like a gaol-bird, out of his den, into the liberal, open air of the sky. Nevertheless, the anecdote this *holder* told me is well worth preserving, more especially the extraordinary frankness evinced in his narrating such a thing to a comparative stranger.

The substance of his story was as follows : Shakings, it seems, had once been a convict in the New York State's Prison at Sing Sing, where he had been for years confined for a crime, which he gave me his solemn word of honour he was wholly innocent of. He told me that, after his term had expired, and he went out into the world again, he never could stumble upon any of his old Sing Sing associates without dropping into a public-house and talking over old times. And when fortune

would go hard with him, and he felt out of sorts, and incensed at matters and things in general, he told me that, at such time, he almost wished he was back again in Sing Sing, where he was relieved from all anxieties about what he should eat and drink, and was supported, like the President of the United States and Prince Albert, at the public charge. He used to have such a snug little cell, he said, all to himself, and never felt afraid of housebreakers, for the walls were uncommonly thick, and his door was securely bolted for him, and a watchman was all the time walking up and down in the passage, while he himself was fast asleep and dreaming. To this, in substance, the *holder* added, that he narrated this anecdote because he thought it applicable to a man-of-war, which he scandalously asserted to be a sort of State Prison afloat.

Concerning the curious disposition to fraternize and be sociable, which this Shakings mentioned as characteristic of the convicts liberated from his old homestead at Sing Sing, it may well be asked, whether it may not prove to be some feeling, somehow akin to the reminiscent impulses which influenced them, that shall hereafter fraternally reunite all us mortals, when we shall have exchanged this State's Prison, man-of-war world of ours for another and a better.

From the foregoing account of the great difficulty we had in killing time while in port, it must not be inferred that on board of the *Neversink* in Rio there was

literally no work to be done. At long intervals the *launch* would come alongside with water-casks, to be emptied into iron tanks in the hold. In this way nearly fifty thousand gallons, as chronicled in the books of the master's mate, were decanted into the ship's bowels—a ninety days' allowance. With this huge Lake Ontario in us, the mighty Neversink might be said to resemble the united continent of the Eastern Hemisphere—floating in a vast ocean herself, and having a Mediterranean floating in her.

CHAPTER XLIII.

SMUGGLING IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

IT is in a good degree owing to the idleness just described, that, while lying in harbour, the man-of-war's-man is exposed to the most temptations, and gets into his saddest scrapes. For though his vessel be anchored a mile from the shore, and her sides are patrolled by sentries night and day, yet these things cannot entirely prevent the seductions of the land from reaching him. The prime agent in working his calamities in port is his old arch-enemy, the ever-devilish god of grog.

Immured as the man-of-war's-man is, serving out his weary three years in a sort of sea-Newgate, from which he cannot escape, either by the roof or burrowing under ground, he too often flies to the bottle to seek relief from the intolerable ennui of nothing to do, and nowhere to go. His ordinary government allowance of spirits, one gill per diem, is not enough to give a sufficient fillip to his listless senses; he pronounces his grog basely *watered*; he scouts it, as *thinner than muslin*; he craves a more vigorous *nip at the cable*, a more sturdy *swig at the halyards*; and if opium were to be had, many would steep themselves a thousand

fathoms down in the densest fumes of that oblivious drug. Tell him that the delirium tremens, and the mania-a-potu lie in ambush for drunkards, he will say to you, "Let them bear down upon me, then, before the wind; any thing that smacks of life is better than to feel Davy Jones's chest-lid on your nose." He is reckless as an avalanche; and though his fall destroy himself and others, yet a ruinous commotion is better than being frozen fast in unendurable solitudes. No wonder, then, that he goes all lengths to procure the thing he craves; no wonder that he pays the most exorbitant prices, breaks through all law, and braves the ignominious lash itself, rather than be deprived of his stimulus.

Now, concerning no one thing in a man-of-war are the regulations more severe than respecting the smuggling of grog, and being found intoxicated. For either offence there is but one penalty, invariably enforced; and that is, the degradation of the gangway.

All conceivable precautions are taken by most frigate-executives to guard against the secret admission of spirits into the vessel. In the first place, no shore-boat whatever is allowed to approach a man-of-war in a foreign harbour without permission from the Officer of the deck. Even the *bum-boats*, the small craft licensed by the officers to bring off fruit for the sailors, to be bought out of their own money—these are invariably inspected before permitted to hold intercourse

with the ship's company. And not only this, but every one of the numerous ship's boats—kept almost continually plying to and from the shore—are similarly inspected, sometimes each boat twenty times in the day.

This inspection is thus performed : The boat being descried by the quarter-master from the poop, she is reported to the deck-officer, who thereupon summons the master-at-arms, the ship's Chief of Police. This functionary now stations himself at the gangway, and as the boat's crew, one by one, come up the side, he personally overhauls them, making them take off their hats, and then, placing both hands upon their heads, draws his palms slowly down to their feet, carefully feeling all unusual protuberances. If nothing suspicious is felt, the man is let pass ; and so on, till the whole boat's crew, averaging about sixteen men, are examined. The Chief of Police then descends into the boat, and walks from stem to stern, eyeing it all over, and poking his long rattan into every nook and cranny. This operation concluded, and nothing found, he mounts the ladder, touches his hat to the deck-officer, and reports the boat *clean* ; whereupon she is hauled out to the booms.

Thus it will be seen that not a man of the ship's company ever enters the vessel from shore without it being rendered next to impossible, apparently, that he should have succeeded in smuggling anything. Those individuals who are permitted to board the ship without

undergoing this ordeal, are only persons whom it would be preposterous to search—such as the Commodore himself, the Captain, Lieutenants, &c., and gentlemen and ladies coming as visitors.

For any thing to be clandestinely thrust through the lower port-holes at night, is rendered very difficult, from the watchfulness of the quarter-master in hailing all boats that approach, long before they draw alongside, and the vigilance of the sentries, posted on platforms overhanging the water, whose orders are to fire into a strange boat which, after being warned to withdraw, should still persist in drawing nigh. Moreover, thirty-two-pound shot are slung to ropes, and suspended over the bows, to drop a hole into and sink any small craft, which, spite of all precautions, by strategy should succeed in getting under the bows with liquor by night. Indeed, the whole power of martial law is enlisted in this matter ; and every one of the numerous officers of the ship, besides his general zeal in enforcing the regulations, adds to that a personal feeling, since the sobriety of the men abridges his own cares and anxieties.

How then, it will be asked, in the face of an argus-eyed police, and in defiance even of bayonets and bullets, do man-of-war's-men contrive to smuggle their spirits? Not to enlarge upon minor stratagems—every few days detected, and rendered nought (such as rolling up, in a neckerchief, a long, slender “skin” of grog,

like a sausage, and in that manner ascending to the deck out of a boat just from shore ; or openly bringing on board cocoa-nuts and melons, procured from a knavish bum-boat, filled with spirits, instead of milk or water)—we will only mention here two or three other modes, coming under my own observation.

While in Rio, a fore-top-man, belonging to the second cutter, paid down the money, and made an arrangement with a person encountered at the Palace-landing ashore, to the following effect. Of a certain moonless night, he was to bring^d off three gallons of spirits, *in skins*, and moor them to the frigate's anchor-buoy—some distance from the vessel—attaching something heavy, to sink them out of sight. In the middle watch of the night, the fore-top-man slips out of his hammock, and by creeping along in the shadows, eludes the vigilance of the master-at-arms and his mates, gains a port-hole, and softly lowers himself into the water, almost without creating a ripple—the sentries marching to and fro on their overhanging platform above him. He is an expert swimmer, and paddles along under the surface, every now and then rising a little, and lying motionless on his back to breathe—little but his nose exposed. The buoy gained, he cuts the skins adrift, ties them round his body, and in the same adroit manner makes good his return.

This feat is very seldom attempted, for it needs the utmost caution, address, and dexterity ; and no one

but a super-expert burglar, and faultless Leander of a swimmer, could achieve it.

From the greater privileges which they enjoy, the "*forward officers*," that is, the Gunner, Boatswain, &c., have much greater opportunities for successful smuggling than the common seamen. Coming alongside one night in a cutter, Yarn, our boatswain, in some inexplicable way, contrived to slip several skins of brandy through the air-port of his own state-room. The feat, however, must have been perceived by one of the boat's crew, who immediately, on gaining the deck, sprung down the ladders, stole into the boatswain's room, and made away with the prize, not three minutes before the rightful owner entered to claim it. Though, from certain circumstances, the thief was known to the aggrieved party, yet the latter could say nothing, since he himself had infringed the law. But the next day, in the capacity of captain of the ship's executioners, Yarn had the satisfaction (it was so to him), of standing over the robber at the gangway ; for, being found intoxicated with the very liquor the boatswain himself had smuggled, the man had been condemned to a flogging.

This recalls another instance, still more illustrative of the knotted, trebly intertwined villainy, accumulating at a sort of compound interest in a man-of-war. The cockswain of the Commodore's barge takes his crew apart, one by one, and cautiously sounds them as to

their fidelity—not to the United States of America, but to himself. Three individuals, whom he deems doubtful—that is, faithful to the United States of America—he procures to be discharged from the barge, and men of his own selection are substituted; for he is always an influential character, this cockswain of the Commodore's barge. Previous to this, however, he has seen to it well, that no Temperance men—that is, sailors who do not draw their government ration of grog, but take the money for it—he has seen to it, that none of these *balkers* are numbered among his crew. Having now proved his men, he divulges his plan to the assembled body; a solemn oath of secrecy is obtained, and he waits the first fit opportunity to carry into execution his nefarious designs.

At last it comes. One afternoon the barge carries the Commodore across the Bay to a fine water-side settlement of noblemen's seats, called Praya Grande. The Commodore is visiting a Portuguese marquis, and the pair linger long over their dinner in an arbour in the garden. Meanwhile, the cockswain has liberty to roam about where he pleases. He searches out a place where some choice *red-eye* (brandy) is to be had, purchases six large bottles, and conceals them among the trees. Under the pretence of filling the boat-keg with water, which is always kept in the barge to refresh the crew, he now carries it off into the grove, knocks out the head, puts the bottles inside, reheads the keg, fills

it with water, carries it down to the boat, and audaciously restores it to its conspicuous position in the middle, with its bung-hole up. When the Commodore comes down to the beach, and they pull off for the ship, the Cockswain, in a loud voice, commands the nearest man to take that bung out of the keg—that precious water will spoil. Arrived alongside the frigate, the boat's crew are overhauled, as usual, at the gangway; and nothing being found on them, are passed. The master-at-arms now descending into the barge, and finding nothing suspicious, reports it *clean*, having put his finger into the open bung of the keg and tasted that the water was pure. The barge is ordered out to the booms, and deep night is waited for, ere the Cockswain essays to snatch the bottles from the keg.

But, unfortunately for the success of this masterly smuggler, one of his crew is a weak-pated fellow, who, having drank somewhat freely ashore, goes about the gun-deck throwing out profound tipsy hints concerning some unutterable proceeding on the ship's anvil. A knowing old sheet-anchor-man, an unprincipled fellow, putting this, that, and the other together, ferrets out the mystery; and straightway resolves to reap the goodly harvest which the Cockswain has sowed. He seeks him out, takes him to one side, and addresses him thus:—

“Cockswain, you have been smuggling off some *red-eye*, which at this moment is in your barge at the

booms. Now, Cockswain, I have stationed two of my messmates at the port-holes, on that side of the ship; and if they report to me that you, or any of your bargemen, offer to enter that barge before morning, I will immediately report you as a smuggler to the Officer of the deck."

The Cockswain is astounded; for, to be reported to the deck-officer as a smuggler, would inevitably procure him a sound flogging, and be the disgraceful *breaking* of him as a petty officer, receiving four dollars a month beyond his pay as an able seaman. He attempts to bribe the other to secrecy, by promising half the profits of the enterprise; but the sheet-anchor-man's integrity is like a rock; he is no mercenary, to be bought up for a song. The Cockswain, therefore, is forced to swear that neither himself, nor any of his crew, shall enter the barge before morning. This done, the sheet-anchor-man goes to his confidants, and arranges his plans. In a word, he succeeds in introducing the six brandy bottles into the ship; five of which he sells at eight dollars a bottle; and then, with the sixth, between two guns, he secretly regales himself and confederates; while the helpless Cockswain, stifling his rage, bitterly eyes them from afar.

Thus, though they say that there is honour among thieves, there is little among man-of-war smugglers.

CHAPTER XLIV.

A KNAVE IN OFFICE IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

THE last smuggling story now about to be related also occurred while we lay at Rio. It is the more particularly presented, since it furnishes the most curious evidence of the almost incredible corruption pervading nearly all ranks in some men-of-war.

For some days, the number of intoxicated sailors collared and brought up to the mast by the master-at-arms, to be reported to the deck-officers—previous to a flogging at the gangway—had in the last degree excited the surprise and vexation of the Captain and senior officers. So strict were the Captain's regulations concerning the suppression of grog-smuggling, and so particular had he been in charging the matter upon all the Lieutenants, and every under-strapper official in the frigate, that he was wholly at a loss how so large a quantity of spirits could have been spirited into the ship, in the face of all these checks, guards, and precautions.

Still additional steps were adopted to detect the smugglers; and Bland, the master-at-arms, together with his corporals, were publicly harangued at the mast by the Captain in person, and charged to exert their

best powers in suppressing the traffic. Crowds were present at the time, and saw the master-at-arms touch his cap in obsequious homage, as he solemnly assured the Captain that he would still continue to do his best ; as, indeed, he said, he had always done. He concluded with a pious ejaculation, expressive of his personal abhorrence of smuggling and drunkenness, and his fixed resolution, so help him Heaven, to spend his last wink in setting up by night, to spy out all deeds of darkness.

"I do not doubt you, master-at-arms," returned the Captain ; "now go to your duty." This master-at-arms was a favourite of the Captain's.

The next morning, before breakfast, when the market-boat came off (that is, one of the ship's boats regularly deputed to bring off the daily fresh provisions for the officers)—when this boat came off, the master-at-arms, as usual, after carefully examining both her and her crew, reported them to the deck-officer to be free from suspicion. The provisions were then hoisted out, and among them came a good-sized wooden box, addressed to "Mr. —, Purser of the United States ship *Neversink*." Of course, any private matter of this sort, destined for a gentleman of the ward-room, was sacred from examination, and the master-at-arms commanded one of his corporals to carry it down into the Purser's state-room. But recent occurrences had sharpened the vigilance of the deck-officer to an un-

wonted degree, and seeing the box going down the hatchway, he demanded what that was, and whom it was for.

"All right, sir," said the master-at-arms, touching his cap; "stores for the Purser, sir."

"Let it remain on deck," said the Lieutenant. "Mr. Montgomery!" calling a midshipman, "ask the Purser whether there is any box coming off for him this morning."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the middy touching his cap.

Presently he returned, saying that the Purser was ashore.

"Very good, then; Mr. Montgomery, have that box put into the 'brig,' with strict orders to the sentry not to suffer any one to touch it."

"Had I not better take it down into my mess, sir, till the Purser comes off?" said the master-at-arms, deferentially.

"I have given my orders, sir!" said the Lieutenant turning away.

When the Purser came on board, it turned out that he knew nothing at all about the box. He had never so much as heard of it in his life. So it was again brought up before the deck-officer, who immediately summoned the master-at-arms.

"Break open that box!"

"Certainly, sir!" said the master-at-arms; and, wrenching off the cover, twenty-five brown jugs, like

a litter of twenty-five brown pigs, were found snugly nestled in a bed of straw.

"The smugglers are at work, sir," said the master-at-arms, looking up.

"Uncork and taste it," said the officer.

The master-at-arms did so ; and smacking his lips after a puzzled fashion, was a little doubtful whether it was American whisky or Holland gin ; but he said he was not used to liquor.

"Brandy ; I know it by the smell," said the officer ; "return the box to the brig."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the master-at-arms, redoubling his activity.

The affair was at once reported to the Captain, who, incensed at the audacity of the thing, adopted every plan to detect the guilty parties. Inquiries were made ashore ; but by whom the box had been brought down to the market-boat there was no finding out. Here the matter rested for a time.

Some days after, one of the boys of the mizzen-top was flogged for drunkenness, and, while suspended in agony at the gratings, was made to reveal from whom he had procured his spirits. The man was called, and turned out to be an old superannuated marine, one Scriggs, who did the cooking for the marine-sergeants and masters-at-arms' mess. This marine was one of the most villanous-looking fellows in the ship, with a squinting, picklock, grey eye, and hang-dog, gallows

gait. How such a most unmartial vagabond had insinuated himself into the honourable marine corps was a perfect mystery. He had always been noted for his personal uncleanness, and among all hands, fore and aft, had the reputation of being a notorious old miser, who denied himself the few comforts, and many of the common necessities of a man-of-war life.

Seeing no escape, Scriggs fell on his knees before the Captain, and confessed the charge of the boy. Observing the fellow to be in an agony of fear at the sight of the boatswain's mates and their lashes, and all the striking parade of public punishment, the Captain must have thought this a good opportunity for completely pumping him of all his secrets. This terrified marine was at length forced to reveal his having been for some time an accomplice in a complicated system of underhand villainy, the head of which was no less a personage than the indefatigable chief of police, the master-at-arms himself. It appeared that this official had his confidential agents ashore, who supplied him with spirits, and in various boxes, packages, and bundles—addressed to the Purser and others—brought them down to the frigate's boats at the landing. Ordinarily, the appearance of these things for the Purser and other ward-room gentlemen occasioned no surprise; for almost every day some bundle or other is coming off for them, especially for the Purser; and, as the master-at-arms was always present on these occasions, it was an easy

matter for him to hurry the smuggled liquor out of sight, and under pretence of carrying the box or bundle down to the Purser's room, hide it away upon his own premises.

The miserly marine, Scriggs, with the picklock eye, was the man who clandestinely sold the spirits to the sailors, thus completely keeping the master-at-arms in the background. The liquor sold at the most exorbitant prices ; at one time reaching twelve dollars the bottle in cash, and thirty dollars a bottle in orders upon the Purser, to be honoured upon the frigate's arrival home. It may seem incredible that such prices should have been given by the sailors ; but when some man-of-war's-men crave liquor, and it is hard to procure, they would almost barter ten years of their lifetime for but one solitary "*tot*," if they could.

The sailors who became intoxicated with the liquor thus smuggled on board by the master-at-arms, were, in repeated instances, officially seized by that functionary, and scourged at the gangway. In a previous place it has been shown how conspicuous a part the master-at-arms enacts at this scene.

The ample profits of this iniquitous business were divided between all the parties concerned in it ; Scriggs, the marine, coming in for one-third. His cook's mess-chest being brought on deck, four canvass bags of silver were found in it, amounting to a sum something short of as many hundred dollars.

The guilty parties were scourged, double-ironed, and for several weeks were confined in the "brig," under a sentry; all but the master-at-arms, who was merely cashiered, and imprisoned for a time, with bracelets at his wrists. Upon being liberated, he was turned adrift among the ship's company; and, by way of disgracing him still more, was thrust into the *waist*, the most inglorious division of the ship.

Upon going to dinner one day, I found him soberly seated at my own mess; and at first I could not but feel some very serious scruples about dining with him. Nevertheless, he was a man to study and digest; so upon a little reflection, I was not displeased at his presence. It amazed me, however, that he had wormed himself into the mess, since so many of the other messes had declined the honour; until at last, I ascertained that he had induced a messmate of ours, a distant relation of his, to prevail upon the cook to admit him.

Now it would not have answered for hardly any other mess in the ship to have received this man among them, for it would have torn a huge rent in their reputation; but our mess, A. No. 1—the Forty-two-pounder Club—was composed of so fine a set of fellows; so many captains of tops, and quarter-masters—men of undeniable mark on board ship—of long-established standing and consideration on the gun-deck; that with impunity we could do many equivocal things, utterly

inadmissible for messes of inferior pretension. Besides, though we all abhorred the monster of Sin itself, yet, from our social superiority, highly rarified education in our lofty top, and large and liberal sweep of the aggregate of things, we were in a good degree free from those useless, personal prejudices, and galling hatreds against conspicuous *sinner*s—not *Sin*—which so widely prevail among men of warped understandings, and unchristian and uncharitable hearts. No; the superstitions and dogmas concerning Sin had not laid their withering maxims upon our hearts. We perceived how that evil was but good disguised, and a knave a saint in his way; how that in other planets, perhaps, what we deem wrong, may there be deemed right; even as some substances, without undergoing any mutations in themselves, utterly change their colour, according to the light thrown upon them. We perceived that the anticipated millenium must have begun upon the morning the first worlds were created; and that, taken all in all, our man-of-war world itself was as eligible a round-sterned craft as any to be found in the Milky May. And we fancied that though some of us, of the gun-deck, were at times condemned to sufferings and slights, and all manner of tribulation and anguish, yet, no doubt, it was only our misapprehension of these things that made us take them for woeful pains instead of the most agreeable pleasures. I have dreamed of a sphere, says Pinzella, where to break a man on the wheel is held the

most exquisite of delights you can confer upon him ; where for one gentleman in any way to vanquish another, is accounted an everlasting dishonour ; where to tumble one into a pit after death, and then throw cold clods upon his upturned face, is a species of contumely, only inflicted upon the most notorious criminals.

But whatever we messmates thought, in whatever circumstances we found ourselves, we never forgot that our frigate, bad as it was, was homeward-bound. Such, at least, were our reveries at times, though sorely jarred, now and then, by events that took our philosophy aback. For after all, philosophy—that is, the best wisdom that has ever in any way been revealed to our man-of-war world—is but a slough and a mire, with a few tufts of good footing here and there.

But there was one man in the mess who would have nought to do with our philosophy—a churlish, ill-tempered, unphilosophical, superstitious old bear of a quarter-gunner ; a believer in Tophet, for which he was accordingly preparing himself. Priming was his name ; but methinks I have spoken of him before.

Besides, this Bland, the master-at-arms, was no vulgar, dirty knave. In him—to modify Burke's phrase—vice *seemed*, but only seemed, to lose half its seeming evil by losing all its apparent grossness. He was a neat and gentlemanly villain, and broke his biscuit with a dainty hand. There was a fine polish

about his whole person, and a pliant, insinuating style in his conversation, that was, socially, quite irresistible. Save my noble captain, Jack Chase, he proved himself the most entertaining, I had almost said the most companionable man in the mess. Nothing but his mouth, that was somewhat small, Moorish-arched, and wickedly delicate, and his snaky, black eye, that at times shone like a dark-lantern in a jeweller's-shop at midnight, betokened the accomplished scoundrel within. But in his conversation there was no trace of evil; nothing equivocal; he studiously shunned an indelicacy, never swore, and chiefly abounded in passing puns and witticisms, varied with humorous contrasts between ship and shore life, and many agreeable and racy anecdotes, very tastefully narrated. In short—in a merely psychological point of view, at least—he was a charming blackleg. Ashore, such a man might have been an irreproachable mercantile swindler, circulating in polite society.

But he was still more than this. Indeed, I claim for this master-at-arms a lofty and honourable niche in the Newgate Calender of history. His intrepidity, coolness, and wonderful self-possession in calmly resigning himself to a fate that thrust him from an office in which he had tyrannized over five hundred mortals, many of whom hated and loathed him, passed all belief; his intrepidity, I say, in now fearlessly gliding among them, like a disarmed sword-fish among ferocious

white sharks; this, surely, bespoke no ordinary man. While in office, even, his life had often been secretly attempted by the seamen whom he had brought to the gangway. Of dark nights they had dropped shot down the hatchways, destined "to damage his pepper-box," as they phrased it; they had made ropes with a hangman's noose at the end, and tried to *lasso* him in dark corners. And now he was adrift among them, under notorious circumstances of superlative villainy, at last dragged to light; and yet he blandly smiled, politely offered his cigar-holder to a perfect stranger, and laughed and chatted to right and left, as if springy, buoyant, and elastic, with an angelic conscience, and sure of kind friends wherever he went, both in this life and the life to come.

While he was lying ironed in the "brig," gangs of the men were sometimes overheard whispering about the terrible reception they would give him when he should be set at large. Nevertheless, when liberated, they seemed confounded by his erect and cordial assurance, his gentlemanly sociability and fearless companionableness. From being an implacable police-man, vigilant, cruel, and remorseless in his office, however polished in his phrases, he was now become a disinterested, sauntering man of leisure, winking at all improprieties, and ready to laugh and make merry with any one. Still, at first, the men gave him a wide berth, and returned scowls for his smiles; but who can

for ever resist the very Devil himself, when he comes in the guise of a gentleman, free, fine, and frank? Though Clanqui's pious Zantua hates the Devil in his horns and harpooner's tail, yet she smiles and nods to the engaging fiend in the persuasive, winning, oily, wholly harmless Don. But, however it was, I, for one, regarded this master-at-arms with mixed feelings of detestation, pity, admiration, and something opposed to enmity. I could not but abominate him when I thought of his conduct; but I pitied the continual gnawing which, under all his deftly-donned disguises, I saw at the bottom of his soul. I admired his heroism in sustaining himself so well under such reverses. And when I thought how arbitrary the *Articles of War* are in defining a man-of-war villain; how much undetected guilt might be sheltered by the aristocratic awning of our quarter-deck; how many florid pursers, ornaments of the ward-room, had been legally protected in defrauding "the people," I could not but say to myself, Well, after all, though this man is a most wicked one indeed, yet is he even more luckless than depraved.

Besides, a studied observation of Bland convinced me that he was an organic and irreclaimable scoundrel, who did wicked deeds as the cattle browse the herbage, because wicked deeds seemed the legitimate operation of his whole infernal organization. Phrenologically, he was without a soul. Is it to be wondered at, that the devils are irreligious? What, then, thought I, who is

to blame in this matter? For one, I will not take the Day of Judgment upon me by authoritatively pronouncing upon the essential criminality of any man-of-war's-man; and Christianity has taught me that, at the last day, man-of-war's-men will not be judged by the *Articles of War*, nor by the *United States Statutes at Large*, but by immutable laws, ineffably beyond the comprehension of the honourable board of Commodores and Navy Commissioners.

But though I will stand by even a man-of-war thief, and defend him from being seized up at the gangway, if I can—remembering that my Saviour once hung between two thieves, promising one life eternal—yet I would not, after the plain conviction of a villain, again let him entirely loose to prey upon honest seamen, fore and aft all three decks. But this did Captain Claret; and though the thing may not perhaps be credited, nevertheless, here it shall be recorded.

After the master-at-arms had been adrift among the ship's company for several weeks, and we were within a few days' sail of home, he was summoned to the mast, and publicly reinstated in his office as the ship's chief of police. Perhaps Captain Claret had read the *Memoirs of Vidocq*, and believed in the old saying, *Set a rogue to catch a rogue*. Or, perhaps, he was a man of very tender feelings, highly susceptible to the soft emotions of gratitude, and could not bear to leave in disgrace a person who, out of the generosity of his

heart, had, about a year previous, presented him with a rare snuff-box, fabricated from a sperm-whale's tooth, with a curious silver hinge, and cunningly wrought in the shape of a whale; also a splendid gold-mounted cane, of a costly Brazilian wood, with a gold plate, bearing the Captain's name and rank in the service, the place and time of his birth, and with a vacancy underneath—no doubt providentially left for his heirs to record his decease.

Certain it was that, some months previous to the master-at-arms' disgrace, he had presented these articles to the Captain, with his best love and compliments; and the Captain had received them, and seldom went ashore without the cane, and never took snuff but out of that box. With some Captains, a sense of propriety might have induced them to return these presents, when the generous donor had proved himself unworthy of having them retained; but it was not Captain Claret who would inflict such a cutting wound upon any officer's sensibilities, though long-established naval customs had habituated him to scourging "the people" upon an emergency.

Now had Captain Claret deemed himself constitutionally bound to decline all presents from his subordinates, the sense of gratitude would not have operated to the prejudice of justice. And, as some of the subordinates of a man-of-war captain are apt to invoke his good wishes and mollify his conscience by making him

friendly gifts, it would perhaps have been an excellent thing for him to adopt the plan pursued by the President of the United States, when he received a present of lions and Arabian chargers from the Sultan of Muscat. Being forbidden by his sovereign lords and masters, the imperial people, to accept of any gifts from foreign powers, the President sent them to an auctioneer, and the proceeds were deposited in the Treasury. In the same manner, when Captain Claret received his snuff-box and cane, he might have accepted them very kindly, and then sold them off to the highest bidder, perhaps to the donor himself, who in that case would never have tempted him again.

Upon his return home, Bland was paid off for his full term, not deducting the period of his suspension. He again entered the service in his old capacity.

As no further allusion will be made to this affair, it may as well be stated now, that, for the very brief period elapsing between his restoration and being paid off in port by the Purser, the master-at-arms conducted himself with infinite discretion, artfully steering between any relaxation of discipline—which would have awakened the displeasure of the officers—and any unwise severity—which would have revived, in ten-fold force, all the old grudges of the seamen under his command.

Never did he show so much talent and tact as when vibrating in this his most delicate predicament; and plenty of cause was there for the exercise of his

cunningest abilities ; for, upon the discharge of our man-of-war's-men at home, should he *then* be held by them as an enemy ; as free and independent citizens they would waylay him in the public streets, and take purple vengeance for all his iniquities, past, present, and possible in the future. More than once, a master-at-arms ashore has been seized by night by an exasperated crew, and served as Origen served himself, or as his enemies served Abelard.

But though, under extreme provocation, "the people" of a man-of-war have been guilty of the maddest vengeance, yet, at other times, they are very placable and milky-hearted, even to those who may have outrageously abused them ; many things in point might be related, but I forbear.

This account of the master-at-arms cannot better be concluded than by denominating him, in the vivid language of the Captain of the Fore-top, as "*the two ends and middle of the thrice-laid strand of a bloody rascal,*" which was intended for a terse, well-knit, and all-comprehensive assertion, without omission or reservation. It was also asserted that, had Tophet itself been raked with a fine tooth-comb, such another ineffable villain could not by any possibility have been caught.

CHAPTER XLV.

PUBLISHING POETRY IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

A DAY or two after our arrival in Rio, a rather amusing incident occurred to a particular acquaintance of mine, young Lemsford, the gun-deck bard.

The great guns of an armed ship have blocks of wood, called *tompions*, painted black, inserted in their muzzles, to keep out the spray of the sea. These tompions slip in and out very handily, like covers to butter firkins.

By advice of a friend, Lemsford, alarmed for the fate of his box of poetry, had latterly made use of a particular gun on the main-deck, in the tube of which he thrust his manuscript, by simply crawling partly out of the port-hole, removing the tompion, inserting his papers, tightly rolled, and making all snug again. Little Quoin, the quarter-gunner, was on the "sick-list" then.

Breakfast over, Lemsford and I were reclining in the main-top—where, by permission of my noble master, Jack Chase, I had invited him—when, of a sudden, we heard a cannonading. It was our own ship.

"Ah!" said a top-man, "returning the shore salute they gave us yesterday."

"O Lord!" cried Lemsford, "my *Songs of the Sirens*!" and he ran down the rigging to the batteries; but just as he touched the gun-deck, gun No. 20—his literary strong-box—went off with a terrific report.

"Well, my after-guard Virgil," said Jack Chase to him, as he slowly returned up the rigging, "did you get it? You need not answer; I see you were too late. But never mind, my boy; no printer could do the business for you better. That's the way to publish, White-Jacket," turning to me—"fire it right into 'em; every canto a twenty-four-pound shot; *hull* the block-heads whether they will or no. And mind you, Lemsford, when your shot does the most execution, you hear the least from the foe. A killed man cannot even lisp."

"Glorious Jack!" cried Lemsford, running up and snatching him by the hand, "say that again, Jack! look me in the eyes. By all the Homers, Jack, you have made my soul mount like a balloon! Jack, I'm a poor devil of a poet. Not two months before I shipped aboard here, I published a volume of poems, very aggressive on the world, Jack. Heaven knows what it cost me. I published it, Jack, and the cursed publisher sued me for damages; my friends looked sheepish, one or two who liked it were non-committal; and as for the addle-pated mob and rabble, they

thought they had found out a fool. Blast them, Jack, what they call the public is a monster, like the idol we saw in Owwhyhee, with the head of a jackass, the body of a baboon, and the tail of a scorpion !”

“I don’t like that,” said Jack ; “when I’m ashore, I myself am part of the public.”

“Your pardon, Jack ; you are not. You are then a part of the people, just as you are aboard the frigate here. The public is one thing, Jack, and the people another.”

“You are right,” said Jack ; “right as this leg. Virgil, you are a trump ; you are a jewel, my boy. The public and the people ! Ay, ay, my lads, let us hate the one, and cleave to the other.”

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE COMMODORE ON THE POOP, AND ONE OF "THE PEOPLE" UNDER THE
HANDS OF THE SURGEON.

A DAY or two after the publication of Lemsford's "Songs of the Sirens," a sad accident befel a mess-mate of mine, one of the captains of the mizzen-top. He was a fine little Scot, who from the premature loss of the hair on the top of his head, always went by the name of *Baldy*. This baldness was no doubt, in great part, attributable to the same cause that early thins the locks of most man-of-war's-men—namely, the hard, unyielding, and ponderous man-of-war, and navy-regulation, tarpaulin hat, which, when new, is stiff enough to sit upon, and indeed, in lieu of his thumb, sometimes serves the common sailor for a bench.

Now, there is nothing upon which the Commodore of a squadron more prides himself than upon the celerity with which his men can handle the sails, and go through with all the evolutions pertaining thereto. This is especially manifested in harbour, when other vessels of his squadron are near, and perhaps the armed ships of rival nations.

Upon these occasions, surrounded by his post-captain satraps—each of whom in his own floating island is king—the Commodore domineers over all—emperor

of the whole oaken archipelago; yea magisterial and magnificent as the Sultan of the Isles of Sooloo.

But, even as so potent an emperor and Cæsar to boot as the Great Don of Germany, Charles the Fifth, was used to divert himself in his dotage by watching the gyrations of the springs and cogs of a long row of clocks, even so does an elderly Commodore while away his leisure in harbour, by what is called "*exercising guns*," and also "*exercising yards and sails*;" causing the various spars of all the ships under his command to be "braced," "topped," and "cock-billed" in concert, while the Commodore himself sits, something like King Canute, on an arm-chest on the poop of his flag-ship.

But far more regal than any descendant of Charlemagne, more haughty than any Mogul of the East, and almost mysterious and voiceless in his authority as the Great Spirit of the Five Nations, the Commodore deigns not to verbalize his commands; they are imparted by signal.

And as for old Charles the Fifth, again, the gay-pranked, coloured suits of cards were invented to while away his dotage, even so, doubtless, must these pretty little signals of blue and red spotted *bunting* have been devised to cheer the old age of all Commodores.

By the Commodore's side stands the signal-midshipman, with a sea-green bag swung on his shoulder (as a sportsman bears his game-bag), the signal-book in one hand, and the signal spy-glass in the other. As this

signal-book contains the Masonic signs and tokens of the navy, and would therefore be invaluable to an enemy, its binding is always bordered with lead, so as to ensure its sinking in case the ship should be captured. Not the only book this, that might appropriately be bound in lead, though there be many where the author, and not the bookbinder, furnishes the metal.

As White-Jacket understands it, these signals consist of variously-coloured flags, each standing for a certain number. Say there are ten flags, representing the cardinal numbers—the red flag, No. 1 ; the blue flag, No. 2 ; the green flag, No. 3, and so forth ; then by mounting the blue flag over the red, that would stand for No. 21 : if the green flag were set underneath, it would then stand for 213. How easy, then, by endless transpositions, to multiply the various numbers that may be exhibited at the mizzen-peak, even by only seven or eight of these flags.

To each number a particular meaning is applied. No. 100, for instance, may mean, "*Beat to quarters.*" No. 150, "*All hands to grog.*" No. 2,000, "*Strike top-gallant-yards.*" No. 2,110, "*See anything to windward?*" No. 2,800, "*No.*"

And as every man-of-war is furnished with a signal-book, where all these things are set down in order, therefore, though two American frigates—almost perfect strangers to each other—came from the opposite Poles, yet at a distance of more than a mile they could carry on a very liberal conversation in the air.

When several men-of-war of one nation lie at anchor in one port, forming a wide circle round their lord and master, the flag-ship, it is a very interesting sight to see them all obeying the Commodore's orders, who meanwhile never opens his lips.

Thus was it with us in Rio, and hereby hangs the story of my poor messmate Baldy.

One morning, in obedience to a signal from our flag-ship, the various vessels belonging to the American squadron then in harbour simultaneously loosened their sails to dry. In the evening, the signal was set to furl them. Upon such occasions great rivalry exists between the First Lieutenants of the different ships; they vie with each other who shall first have his sails stowed on the yards. And this rivalry is shared between all the officers of each vessel, who are respectively placed over the different top-men; so that the main-mast is all eagerness to vanquish the fore-mast, and the mizzen-mast to vanquish them both. Stimulated by the shouts of their officers, the sailors throughout the squadron exert themselves to the utmost.

"Aloft, top-men! lay out! furl!" cried the First Lieutenant of the *Neversink*.

At the word the men sprang into the rigging, and on all three masts were soon climbing about the yards, in reckless haste to execute their orders.

Now, in furling top-sails or courses, the point of honour, and the hardest work, is in the *bunt*, or middle

of the yard ; this post belongs to the first captain of the top.

“ What are you 'bout there, mizzen-top-men ? ” roared the First Lieutenant, through his trumpet. “ D—n you, you are clumsy as Russian bears ! don't you see the main-top-men are nearly off the yard ? Bear a hand, bear a hand, or I'll stop your grog all round ! You, Baldy ! are you going to sleep there in the bunt ? ”

While this was being said, poor Baldy—his hat off, his face streaming with perspiration—was frantically exerting himself, piling up the ponderous folds of canvass in the middle of the yard ; ever and anon glancing at victorious Jack Chase, hard at work at the main-top-sail-yard before him.

At last, the sail being well piled up, Baldy jumped with both feet into the bunt, holding on with one hand to the chain “ *tie*, ” and in that manner was violently treading down the canvass to pack it close.

“ D—n you, Baldy, why don't you move, you crawling caterpillar ? ” roared the First Lieutenant.

Baldy brought his whole weight to bear on the rebellious sail, and in his frenzied heedlessness let go his hold on the tie.

“ You Baldy ! are you afraid of falling ? ” cried the First Lieutenant.

At that moment, with all his force, Baldy jumped down upon the sail ; the *bunt-gasket* parted ; and a dark

form dropped through the air. Lighting upon the *top-rim*, it rolled off; and the next instant, with a horrid crash of all his bones, Baldy came, like a thunder-bolt, upon the deck.

Aboard of most large men-of-war there is a stout oaken platform, about four feet square, on each side of the quarter-deck. You ascend to it by three or four steps; on top, it is railed in at the sides, with horizontal brass bars. It is called *the Horse Block*; and there the officer of the deck usually stands, in giving his orders at sea.

It was one of these horse blocks, now unoccupied, that broke poor Baldy's fall. He fell lengthwise across the brass bars, bending them into elbows, and crushing the whole oaken platform, steps and all, right down to the deck in a thousand splinters.

He was picked up for dead, and carried below to the surgeon. His bones seemed like those of a man broken on the wheel, and no one thought he would survive the night. But with the surgeon's skilful treatment he at last promised recovery. Surgeon Cuticle devoted all his science to this case.

A curious frame-work of wood was made for the maimed man; and placed in this, with all his limbs stretched out, Baldy lay flat on the floor of the Sick-bay for many weeks. Upon our arrival home, he was able to hobble ashore on crutches; but from a hale, hearty little man, with bronzed cheeks, he was become a mere dislocated skeleton, white as foam; but ere this,

perhaps, his broken bones are healed and whole in the last repose of the man-of-war's-man.

Not many days after Baldy's accident in furling sails—in this same frenzied manner, under the stimulus of a shouting officer—a seaman fell from the main-royal-yard of an English line-of-battle ship near us, and buried his ankle-bones in the deck, leaving two indentations there, as if scooped out by a carpenter's gouge.

The royal-yard forms a cross with the mast, and falling from that lofty cross in a line-of-battle ship is almost like falling from the cross of St. Paul's ; almost like falling as Lucifer from the well-spring of morning down to the Phlegethon of night.

In some cases, a man, hurled thus from a yard, has fallen upon his own shipmates in the tops, and dragged them down with him to the same destruction with himself.

Hardly ever will you hear of a man-of-war returning home after a cruise without the loss of some of her crew from aloft, whereas similar accidents in the merchant service—considering the much greater number of men employed in it—are comparatively few.

Why mince the matter ? The death of most of these man-of-war's-men lies at the door of the souls of those officers, who, while safely standing on deck themselves, scruple not to sacrifice an immortal man or two, in order to show off the excelling discipline of the ship. And thus do "the people" of the gun-deck suffer, that the Commodore on the poop may be glorified.

CHAPTER XLVII.

AN AUCTION IN A MAN-OF-WAR.

SOME allusion has been made to the weariness experienced by the man-of-war's-man while lying at anchor ; but there are scenes now and then that serve to relieve it. Chief among these are the Purser's auctions, taking place while in harbour. Some weeks, or perhaps months, after a sailor dies in an armed vessel, his bag of clothes is in this manner sold, and the proceeds transferred to the account of his heirs or executors.

One of these auctions came off in Rio, shortly after the sad accident of Baldy.

It was a dreamy, quiet afternoon, and the crew were listlessly lying around, when suddenly the Boatswain's whistle was heard, followed by the announcement, "D'ye hear there, fore and aft ! Purser's auction on the spar deck !"

At the sound, the sailors sprang to their feet and mustered round the main-mast. Presently up came the Purser's steward, marshalling before him three or four of his subordinates, carrying several clothes' bags, which were deposited at the base of the mast.

Our Purser's steward was a rather gentlemanly man in his way. Like many young Americans of his class, he had at various times assumed the most opposite functions for a livelihood, turning from one to the other with all the facility of a light-hearted, clever adventurer. He had been a clerk in a steamer on the Mississippi River; an auctioneer in Ohio; a stock actor at the Olympic Theatre in New York; and now he was Purser's steward in the Navy. In the course of this diversified career his natural wit and waggers had been highly spiced, and every way improved; and he had acquired the last and most difficult art of the joker, the art of lengthening his own face while widening those of his hearers, preserving the utmost solemnity while setting them all in a roar. He was quite a favourite with the sailors, which, in a good degree, was owing to his humour; but likewise to his off-hand, irresistible, romantic, theatrical manner of addressing them.

With a dignified air, he now mounted the pedestal of the main-top-sail sheet-bitts, imposing silence by a theatrical wave of his hand; meantime, his subordinates were rummaging the bags, and assorting their contents before him.

"Now, my noble hearties," he began, "we will open this auction by offering to your impartial competition a very superior pair of old boots;" and so saying, he dangled aloft one clumsy cowhide cylinder, almost as large as a fire bucket, as a specimen of the complete pair.

"What shall I have now, my noble tars, for this superior pair of sea-boots?"

"Where's t'other boot?" cried a suspicious-eyed waister. "I remember them 'ere boots. They were old Bob's the quarter-gunner's; there was two on 'em, too. I want to see t'other boot."

"My sweet and pleasant fellow," said the auctioneer, with his blandest accents, "the other boot is not just at hand, but I give you my word of honour that it in all respects corresponds to the one you here see—it does, I assure you. Yes: I solemnly guarantee, my noble sea-fencibles," he added, turning round upon all, "that the other boot is the exact counterpart of this. Now then, say the word, my fine fellows. What shall I have? Ten dollars, did you say?" politely bowing toward some indefinite person in the background.

"No; ten cents," responded a voice.

"Ten cents! ten cents! gallant sailors, for this noble pair of boots," exclaimed the auctioneer, with affected horror; "I must close the auction, my tars of Columbia; this will never do. But let's have another bid; now, come," he added, coaxingly and soothingly. "What is it? One dollar? One dollar, then—one dollar; going at one dollar; going, going—going. Just see how it vibrates"—swinging the boot to and fro—"this superior pair of sea-boots vibrating at one dollar; wouldn't pay for the nails in their heels; going, going—*gone!*" And down went the boots.

"Ah, what a sacrifice! what a sacrifice!" he sighed, tearfully eyeing the solitary fire-bucket, and then glancing round the company for sympathy.

"A sacrifice, indeed!" exclaimed Jack Chase, who stood by; "Purser's Steward, you are Mark Antony over the body of Julius Cæsar."

"So I am, so I am," said the auctioneer. "And look!" he exclaimed, suddenly seizing the boot, and exhibiting it on high, "look, my noble tars, if you have tears, prepare to shed them now. You all do know this boot. I remember the first time ever old Bob put it on. 'Twas on a winter evening, off Cape Horn, between the starboard carronades—that day his precious grog was stopped. Look! in this place a mouse has nibbled through; see what a rent some envious rat has made; through this another filed, and, as he plucked his cursed rasp away, mark how the boot-leg gaped. This was the unkindest cut of all.—But whose are the boots?" suddenly assuming a business-like air; "yours? yours? yours?"

But not a friend of the lamented Bob stood by.

"Tars of Columbia," said the auctioneer, imperatively, "these boots must be sold; and if I can't sell them one way, I must sell them another. How much *a pound*, now, for this superior pair of old boots? going by *the pound* now, remember, my gallant sailors! what shall I have? one cent, do I hear? going now at one cent a pound—going—going—going—*gone!*"

“Whose are they? Yours, Captain of the Waist? Well, my sweet and pleasant friend, I will have them weighed out to you when the auction is over.”

In like manner all the contents of the bags were disposed of, embracing old frocks, trowsers, and jackets, the various sums for which they went being charged to the bidders on the books of the Purser.

Having been present at this auction, though not a purchaser, and seeing with what facility the most dismantled old garments went off, through the magical cleverness of the accomplished auctioneer, the thought occurred to me, that if ever I calmly and positively decided to dispose of my famous white jacket, this would be the very way to do it. I turned the matter over in my mind a long time.

The weather in Rio was genial and warm, and that I would ever again need such a thing as a heavy quilted jacket—and such a jacket as the white one, too—seemed almost impossible. Yet I remembered the American coast, and that it would probably be Autumn when we should arrive there. Yes, I thought of all that, to be sure; nevertheless, the ungovernable whim seized me to sacrifice my jacket and recklessly abide the consequences. Besides, was it not a horrible jacket? To how many annoyances had it subjected me! How many scrapes had it dragged me into! Nay, had it not once jeopardised my very existence? And I had a dreadful presentiment that, if I persisted

in retaining it, it would do so again. Enough ! I will sell it, I muttered ; and so muttering, I thrust my hands further down in my waistband, and walked the maintop in the stern concentration of an inflexible purpose. Next day, hearing that another auction was shortly to take place, I repaired to the office of the Purser's steward, with whom I was upon rather friendly terms. After vaguely and delicately hinting at the object of my visit, I came roundly to the point, and asked him whether he could slip my jacket into one of the bags of clothes next to be sold, and so dispose of it by public auction. He kindly acquiesced, and the thing was done.

In due time all hands were again summoned round the mainmast ; the Purser's steward mounted his post, and the ceremony began. Meantime, I lingered out of sight, but still within hearing, on the gun-deck below, gazing up unperceived, at the scene.

As it is now so long ago, I will here frankly make confession that I had privately retained the services of a friend—Williams, the Yankee pedagogue and pedlar—whose business it would be to linger near the scene of the auction, and, if the bids on the jacket loitered, to start it roundly himself ; and if the bidding then became brisk, he was continually to strike in with the most pertinacious and infatuated bids, and so exasperate competition into the maddest and most extravagant overtures.

A variety of other articles having been put up, the white jacket was slowly produced, and, held high aloft between the auctioneer's thumb and fore-finger, was submitted to the inspection of the discriminating public.

Here it behoves me once again to describe my jacket ; for, as a portrait taken at one period of life will not answer for a later stage ; much more this jacket of mine, undergoing so many changes, needs to be painted again and again, in order truly to present its actual appearance at any given period.

A premature old age had now settled upon it ; all over it bore melancholy scars of the masoned-up pockets that had once trenched it in various directions. Some parts of it were slightly mildewed from dampness ; on one side several of the buttons were gone, and others were broken or cracked, while, alas ! my many mad endeavours to rub it black on the decks had now imparted to the whole garment an exceedingly untidy appearance. Such as it was, with all its faults, the auctioneer displayed it.

" You venerable sheet-anchor-men ! and you, gallant fore-top-men ! and you, my fine waisters ! what do you say now for this superior old jacket ? Buttons and sleeves, lining and skirts, it must this day be sold without reservation. How much for it, my gallant tars of Columbia ? say the word, and how much ? "

" My eyes ! " exclaimed a fore-top-man, " don't that

ere bunch of old swabs belong to Jack Chase's pet? Arn't that *the white jacket*?"

"*The white jacket!*" cried fifty voices in response; "*the white jacket!*" The cry ran fore and aft the ship like a slogan, completely overwhelming the solitary voice of my private friend Williams, while all hands gazed at it with straining eyes, wondering how it came among the bags of deceased mariners.

"Ay, noble tars," said the auctioneer, "you may well stare at it; you will not find another jacket like this on either side of Cape Horn, I assure you. Why, just look at it! How much, now? Give me a bid—but don't be rash; be prudent, be prudent, men; remember your Purser's accounts, and don't be betrayed into extravagant bids."

"Purser's Steward!" cried Grummet, one of the quarter-gunners, slowly shifting his quid from one cheek to the other, like a ballast-stone, "I won't bid on that 'ere bunch of old swabs, unless you put up ten pounds of soap with it."

"Don't mind that old fellow," said the auctioneer. "How much for the jacket, my noble tars?"

"Jacket!" cried a dandy *bone-polisher* of the gun-room. "The sail-maker was the tailor, then. How many fathoms of canvass in it, Purser's Steward?"

"How much for this *jacket*?" reiterated the auctioneer, emphatically.

"*Jacket*, do you call it!" cried a Captain of the

hold. "Why not call it a white-washed man-of-war schooner? Look at the port-holes, to let in the air of cold nights."

"A reg'lar herring-net," chimed in Grummet.

"Gives me the *fever-nagur* to look at it," echoed a mizzen-top-man.

"Silence!" cried the auctioneer. "Start it now—start it, boys; any thing you please, my fine fellows! it *must* be sold. Come, what ought I to have on it, now?"

"Why, Purser's Steward," cried a waister, "you ought to have new sleeves, a new lining, and a new body on it, afore you try to shove it off on a green-horn."

"What are you busin' that 'ere garment for?" cried an old sheet-anchor-man. "Don't you see it's a 'uniform mustering jacket'—three buttons on one side and none on t'other?"

"Silence!" again cried the auctioneer. "How much, my sea-fencibles, for this superior old jacket?"

"Well," said Grummet, "I'll take it for cleaning-rags at one cent."

"Oh, come, give us a bid! say something, Columbians."

"Well, then," said Grummet, all at once bursting into genuine indignation, "if you want us to say something, then heave that bunch of old swabs overboard, *say I*, and show us something worth looking at."

“No one will give me a bid, then? Very good! here, shove it aside. Let’s have something else there.”

While this scene was going forward, and my white jacket was thus being abused, how my heart swelled within me! Thrice was I on the point of rushing out of my hiding-place, and bearing it off from derision; but I lingered, still flattering myself that all would be well, and the jacket find a purchaser at last. But no, alas! there was no getting rid of it, except by rolling a forty-two-pound shot in it, and committing it to the deep. But though, in my desperation, I had once contemplated something of that sort, yet I had now become unaccountably averse to it, from certain involuntary superstitious considerations. If I sink my jacket, thought I, it will be sure to spread itself into a bed at the bottom of the sea, upon which I shall sooner or later recline, a dead man. So, unable to conjure it into the possession of another, and withheld from burying it out of sight for ever, my jacket stuck to me like the fatal shirt on Nessus.

END OF VOL. I.

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